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MUSICAL PROGRESS

A SERIES OF PRACTICAL DISCUSSIONS
OF PRESENT DAY PROBLEMS
IN THE TONE WORLD

By HENRY T. FINCK

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To THEODORE PRESSER
Publisher, Journalist, Educator

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PRELUDE

James Gibbons Huneker relates in his autobiographic *Steeplejack*: "About this time I met Theodore Presser who, as everybody knows, has started musical orphan asylums, homes for reformed musicians, and sanatoriums for hands lamed by excessive use of the thumbs on the black keys. Then, Mr. Presser was a lean, hungry-looking man with his head full of half-crazy schemes; at least, they seemed so to me. He had started a musical monthly whose pulse, temperature, and respiration he watched as if it had been a chick in an incubator. And it was a chick of uncertain health. I wrote paragraphs for it; betimes, I spread my wings and flew to the editorial roost and sounded my little cock-a-doodle-doo. My salary was as ever, nothing; but Theodore let me splash about in his pond and I was contented. Many nights we went to the post-office there anxiously to open letters. What a hurrah of joy when a dollar bill was found for an annual subscription!

"Presser, who is the Henry Ford of Philadelphia sheet-music, saw further ahead than I. *The Etude* has a subscription list that must make envious even Mr. Bok. Presser did it all with his canny Yankee patience and shrewdness."

I do not believe the circulation of *The Etude* is

even now quite as large as that of Edward Bok's *Ladies' Home Journal*, which runs into the millions. But that it is very large is attested by the fact that it is among the few periodicals that are sold at all newsstands. I rejoice in this large circulation as I do, for instance, in that of the *New York Times*, which eloquently refutes the current notion that the public wants nothing but sensationalism and trash.

The Etude has from the start in 1883 eschewed sensationalism and trash. While not avoiding anecdotes, personal details, and biographic romances, it is mostly concerned with the serious problems which confront musicians, teachers, pupils and lovers of music in general. It does not seek the patronage of musicians by printing their pictures accompanied by flattering notices of their appearances, but has lifted itself to its present prominence entirely by uncommercial tactics. In his influence on the musical education of the American public Theodore Presser stands second only to Theodore Thomas.

Almost since its start I have been an occasional contributor to *The Etude*. I have always enjoyed writing for it because, in Huneke's happy phrase, Presser allowed me to "splash about in his pond" as I pleased.

A good many persons do not like to be splashed, and that is why most of the big magazines print only articles that could not possibly ruffle anybody's temper. I gave up years ago writing that kind of denatured articles to order, but was always glad to be lured back to the Presser Pond, in which I could

say anything I pleased about music and musicians provided it was not actually libelous. I have never been afraid to rub anyone's fur the wrong way, at the risk of being scratched; but many times those who scratched me, apologized afterwards, and admitted that I was right and did them good.

With the exception of a few short articles taken over from the New York *Evening Post*, Philip Hale's *Musical World* and Pierre Key's *Musical Digest* the contents of this volume appeared first in *The Etude*. The subjects of not a few of them were suggested by James Francis Cooke, who has the ideal editor's gift of getting out of a contributor the best that's in him.

In preparing these chapters for reprint I have endeavored to give them some coherence by the use of what might be called "leading motives," one of which is indicated in the title of the first chapter, *Mixing Music With Brains*—a name I chose partly because of the surprising public interest in the title of my last book *Gardening With Brains*. The allusion is, of course, to the eminent English artist who, when asked what he mixed his colors with, replied: "I mix them with brains, sir."

The first chapter gives my reasons for believing that mixing music with brains is "the only road to musical success hereafter," while the second and most of the others show in detail how brains *can* be mixed with music. Under the title "Should Musical Critics Be Abolished," the reader will find a statement of the motives which have guided me

throughout my career. As in my other books, I have impartially championed musical genius of many countries, and I have done my best to make every page entertaining as well as instructive, because thirty-five years of experience as lecturer on musical history at the National Conservatory of Music has shown me that the more entertainment there is in a discourse the more good it does the listeners.

CHAPTER I

MIXING MUSIC WITH BRAINS

There is an old story about a young man who went to a famous brain specialist because he was constantly suffering from headaches. After an examination the doctor said that his brain needed a thorough overhauling and suggested that it be left with him for a week.

When the young man came back to get it, the doctor asked if he had not missed it very much.

"Oh no!" was the answer. "I am an operatic tenor."

Voltaire's oft-quoted expression "*bête comme un ténor*"—stupid as a tenor—reveals the general opinion in his day.

"If it's too silly to be spoken, it is sung" is another reflection of former feeling on this subject.

Operatic librettos, in particular, before the day of Wagner, were incredibly silly as a rule, although there were notable exceptions. There was really no reason why composers should bother about getting genuine poetry and drama to set to music for the audiences were not interested in the words or the action but only in the showy or sentimental arias.

It is easy to believe the story about the man in the gallery who startled a gossiping operatic audi-

ence by yelling "Great heavens, the tenor is murdering the soprano!"

PROGRESS IN THE OPERA HOUSE

Pessimists who do not believe in progress and sigh for the good old times will please note that since Voltaire's day there has been a great improvement in tenors and other singers, as well as in conductors, orchestras and audiences.

No longer do music lovers go to the opera merely to hear florid airs sung brilliantly, but they expect the singers to be actors, too, and the more cleverly they combine histrionic art with good singing the more highly they are honored. Emma Calvé, Geraldine Farrar, Jean de Reszke and Caruso, for example.

If another Patti came along today, she would, of course, draw large audiences but it is doubtful if she would be deified as Adelina was. Her luscious voice and her perfect art of singing would arouse enthusiasm, but it would be mitigated by the thought that she was only a singer, not a complete operatic artist.

What is the verdict of posterity on Adelina Patti? It is summed up briefly in Baker *Biographic Dictionary of Musicians*: "Besides her glorious voice and stupendous technical skill she had practically nothing; she was no actress, she lacked temperament, and her musical intelligence was ordinary. She was merely a singer, not an interpreter."

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In a word, the verdict, of posterity on Patti is that she *did not mix her music with brains* and therefore fell short of perfection. And more and more in every department of music, this mixing of music with brains is becoming the criterion of high-class art, the essential condition of success.

CALVÉ A GREATER ARTIST THAN PATTI

In looking back over an experience of more than forty years as a professional critic I can recall nothing quite so perfect from every *possible* point of view as Emma Calvé's *Carmen*. I have written about this in detail in my book on *Success in Music and How it is Won*, but I wish to say here once more what I wrote about her superiority in Patti's own specialty, florid song.

I confess frankly that I was often enraptured by the warblings of Patti in the Academy of Music. Yet, I never was thrilled and moved to tears by her florid singing as I was when I heard Emma Calvé sing the mad scene in *Hamlet*. Here is what I wrote about it: "I hate florid vocal music frantically; I detest mad scenes in particular, and have often poured vials of wrath over that in *Hamlet*; but when Calvé sang it at the Metropolitan Opera House one esthetic thrill (*frisson*, as the French say) chased another down my spinal cord. It was an absolute revelation. When Patti and Melba sang that music, one admired the sensuous beauty of tone, the supple voice, the fluent execution; but

here was something higher—not only flawless technic and mellow tones but tones infused with dramatic emotion. It was nothing short of a miracle.”

HOW CARUSO USED HIS BRAINS

Caruso first sang in New York in 1903. His glorious voice and easy vocal art won for him a big success at the start, but if he had remained what he was then, he would have gone into the history of opera as, like Patti, merely a good singer and not a great operatic interpreter.

From year to year he became more and more absorbed in the parts he acted and sang. He was, as is widely known, an excellent caricaturist (there is a published volume of his cartoons) and he made his skill in sketching an aid in learning a new part. He would make a hundred or more sketches of himself in the new part, showing the different moods and changes of facial expression through which he had to pass. He also “studied carefully the matter of dress, not only for himself but for every one in the cast. And while he did not care to impose his ideas on his *confrères*, they were all so impressed with his thoroughness that they mostly followed his advice. He practically knew every part of the opera he was singing in. He could sing even the least bit of a solo given to a chorus man.”

This information is cited from an article on “Caruso the Sculptor of his own Eleazer,” by Konrad Bercovici, which appeared in the *New York*

Evening Post (August 18, 1921) shortly after the great tenor's death. The writer describes a visit to Caruso's accompanist and life-long friend, Maestro Fucito, in whose apartment he found a gilded bas-relief hanging on the wall.

It was a relief of Caruso in the part of the old Jew Eleazar, in Halévy's opera, *La Juive*, the tenor's last great achievement. And Mr. Fucito pointed to it as an illustration of the way the great tenor worked on a rôle: "After he had spent several months with a noted Jewish actor, from whom he learned all about the Talmud and much Hebrew lore, Caruso brought his other gifts to bear. He sat down to model the face of Eleazar, not as he wished him to appear on the stage, but as he imagined the tragic old figure was in reality. The lines around the eyes, the mark of great pain around the mouth, and the weariness as well as the diffidence of the whole mask, show close analytical study, not only of the rôle but of the whole play of the tragedy of the race. As you can see, Caruso signed his name and the date in Hebrew characters. There are in existence several letters he wrote with Hebrew characters. During the period he studied *La Juive* Caruso was Eleazar more than he was Caruso.

DE RESZKÉ, MAUREL AND RENAUD

Jean de Reszke was another tenor who sang with his brain as well as his vocal cords. I cannot resist the temptation to cite the eloquent words of the

London *World* on his thrilling display of emotion in the last bar he had to sing as Tristan, in Wagner's love tragedy: "Nothing struck me more than his singing of the phrase 'Isolde' as he dies. It was most wonderful; not merely affecting as the despairing and adoring cry of a dying man, thinking of the woman he worships, but far more than that. In it one hears not only love but death. It is the mysterious whispering utterance of a spirit already far away; as if the soul, having started on its dark journey, were compelled by its old and beautiful earthly passion to pause, and to look back down the shadowy vista to the garden of the world that it had left, to the woman that it had left, perhaps forever, and to send down the distance one last farewell, one last dim murmur of love, spectral, magical already with the wonder of another world. Such an effect as this is utterly beyond the reach of any one who is not a great artist. It is thrilling in its imaginative beauty. It opens the gates as poetry does sometimes and shows us a vision of a far-away eternity."

Is it possible for a singer to put so much meaning and emotion into one short word of three syllables? It is; I heard de Reszke do it over and over again. Have we here a glimpse of a future when the art of singing will have reached a much higher general level than it has now? We may well believe this, when we bear in mind the enormous progress from Rubini's trills to de Reszke's thrills. It indicates the

direction in which students must go—the direction of the word “Isolde” as sung by Jean de Reszke.

For fifteen years Verdi was tremendously interested in the French dramatic baritone Victor Maurel. There were Italian baritones who could sing in his *Othello* more mellifluously than this Frenchman, but Verdi preferred him because he mixed brains and histrionic art with his music. “The art of Maurel,” he wrote, “is really immense. . . . I do not know whether to admire most the singer or the interpreter—*when he sings his best he makes one forget that he is singing.*”

The same was true of two other supreme French artists, Emma Calvé and Maurice Renaud. It is the climax and highest test of operatic art.

Caruso’s wonderful art of make-up has been referred to. But in this he was a mere tyro compared to Renaud, of whom I have said elsewhere that “One can study his assumed features like a portrait by a great master and regret that it should be made for the moment only. His make-up is never twice quite the same . . . It takes him an hour and a half to make his ‘head’ for Athanaël (in *Thaïs*), with the beard, which goes on in several pieces and which must be filled in in pencilling. He and M. Gilibert hold that a class should be established in the conservatories to teach this important branch of operatic art.”

Intimately associated with this branch is the gift of emotional expression by means of the features and the body. Can facial expression be taught?

The answer to this question will be given in my next chapter on The Technic of Emotional Expression.

THOUGHT VERSUS EVERLASTING PRACTICE

One of the reasons why Geraldine Farrar's *Madama Butterfly* is so universally admired is that in learning this part she mixed a lot of brains with her music. What made it possible for her, though she had never been in Japan, to look and walk and gesticulate, to make curtsies and lithe movements, just like a real musume? She read everything she could find about the Japanese, and coached with a Japanese actor. To Mable Wagnall's (author of *Stars of the Opera*) she said: "I tried to imbue myself with their spirit. I bought up old prints, and pictures, and costumes; I learned how they eat, and sleep, and walk, and talk, and think, and feel. I read books on the subject in French and in German, as well as in English."

It is better, in this singer's opinion, to indulge in four hours of thought daily and one of practice than in five hours of practice.

Paganini promised that he would some day reveal a secret, taught in no music school, by means of which a student could learn as much in three years as otherwise in ten years of practice. He never did reveal this secret, but he doubtless referred to mute practice—going over his pieces *mentally*.

Paderewski used to spend whole nights going

over his programs mentally, deciding on details of fingering, phrasing, etc., thus saving hours of practice by using his brains.

Salvini, greatest of modern actors, said: "Every detail, every movement, is *thought out* before I do it, and is the outcome of sleepless nights."

To Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler we owe these aphorisms: "In piano work the fingers accomplish one-fourth and *the brain* three-fourths of the result. The fugues of Bach, the études of Chopin, Liszt and Rubinstein, entertain and educate *the mind* while providing an unsurpassed sporting ground for nimble fingers."

Brains and mind and thought and emotion—those are the things that must be mixed with good music if you wish to succeed hereafter.

Yet what are the would-be successors of Caruso doing? Several of them have beautiful voices, but not one is emulating him in cultivating his artistic mind as well as his vocal cords. They will never get \$2,500 a night unless they do what he did.

LESCHETIZKY'S METHOD

It is the same with teachers as with players and singers. In James Francis Cooke's invaluable book of "certified" interviews with world-famed artists entitled *Great Pianists on Piano Playing*, Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler remarks that Leschetizky, to whom all piano students flocked as they previously had flocked to Liszt, was a great force largely "by

virtue of his interesting personality"—that is, his way of mixing brains with his teaching.

At eighty, this pupil writes, he was still a youth full of vitality and enthusiasm, a never-ending source of inspiration. Some student, diffident but worthy, was always encouraged; another was scolded outright. Practical illustration on the piano, showing how not to do it, telling of pertinent stories to elucidate a point, are among the means which he constantly employed to bring out the best that was in his pupils.

To say it again, he mixed brains with his lessons, changing his method to suit the peculiarities of each pupil, just as a doctor uses different remedies for different patients.

One man's medicine is another man's poison, and no two cases of illness are exactly alike.

If physicians used their brains no more than many music teachers do, in pursuance of their regular routine, the gravediggers would all be working overtime.

PERCY GRAINGER AND GRIEG

Few musicians know how to "read between the lines," yet without this gift it is impossible to reveal to an audience the true inwardness of a great composition. The printed page is little more than a skeleton.

A positively thrilling illustration of the truth of this assertion is provided by Grieg's *Norwegian*

Bridal Procession as edited by Percy Grainger, and printed by Theodore Presser. It appeared first in *The Etude* of November, 1920, with two pages—six columns—of comments, explanations and suggestions that exemplify like nothing else I have ever read the value of mixing brains with music. I wish I could quote every word of this article, but must content myself with a few sample paragraphs, leaving it to the reader to find out, among other things, what Grainger writes about the ravishing use that can be made of the middle pedal, this “truly wonderful American invention”:

“The title *Norwegian Bridal Procession Passes By* was frequently used by Grieg for this piece, and it, more clearly than the more familiar title *Norwegian Bridal Procession*, reveals the exact nature of the effect to be striven for in rendering it the impression of a peasant bridal march, played at the head of a bridal procession on its way to church for the wedding ceremony, first heard faintly from afar (measures 1-24), then gradually drawing nearer (measures 25-67), passing the listener close by in a turmoil of clamor and color (measures 68-101), and finally gradually becoming distant once more until at last its strains are well nigh inaudible (measures 102-129).

“Throughout the composition the clanging of church bells is heard blended with the sounds of the bridal march music. This is particularly manifest in the section embracing measures 80-93, while it is not improbable that the introduction (measures 1-4) and the repetitions of this section throughout,

were likewise intended by Grieg to portray a suggestion of distant church chimes.

"Throughout the section beginning at measure 25 the pianist should strive to imitate, in the persistent rhythms of the left hand the monotonous "sawing" of the peasant fiddler.

"In order to convey the impression of the wedding party proceeding to the church to the strains of peasant march music, the pianist should play the piece in metronomically strict time throughout. Any momentary or more protracted alteration of speed in such a composition can only act as a blemish and as a frustration of the obvious intention of the composer. The work should be conceived and rendered *as march music* from first to last; as a solemn, sturdy, *processional* march, with the feet of the marching bridal party falling upon the quarter-notes, twice in every measure.

"Most students will derive much benefit from practicing mainly with the metronome, oftenest at slow speed (say M.M. 108 to the eighth-notes) and sometimes, but less often, with the metronome at the full speed indicated in my edition.

"Every effort should be made to make the impression of distance, gradual approach, closeness, gradual passing by, distance as vivid and sensational as possible and to this end the pianist should not scruple to employ an exaggerated degree of *pianissimo* at the opening and at the close of the composition, and should strive to work up to a clanging riotous *fortissimo* at the climax (measures 68-101)."

CHAPTER II

IS THERE A TECHNIC OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION?

Mark Twain dearly loved to expose shams. No false pretense, however hallowed by tradition, ever got his approval. In his *Innocents Abroad*, talking about famous Italian paintings, he says:

"It vexes me to hear people talk so glibly of 'feeling,' 'expression,' 'tone' and those other easily-acquired and inexpensive technicalities of art that make such a fine show in conversations concerning pictures. There is not one man in seventy-five hundred that can tell *what* a pictured face is intended to express. There is not one man in five hundred that can go into a courtroom and be sure that he will not mistake some harmless innocent of a jurymen for the black-hearted assassin on trial. Yet some people talk of 'character' and presume to interpret 'expression' in pictures. There is an old story that Matthews, the actor, was once lauding the ability of the human face to express the passions and emotions hidden in the breast. He said the countenance could disclose what was passing in the heart plainer than the tongue could.

"'Now,' he said, 'observe my face—what does it express?'

" 'Despair!'

" 'Bah, it expresses peaceful resignation! What does *this* express?'

" 'Rage!'

" 'Stuff! It means terror. *This!*'

" 'Imbecility!'

" 'Fool! It is smothered ferocity! Now *this!*'

" 'Joy!'

" 'Oh, perdition! *Any* ass could see it means insanity!'

While music is admittedly "the emotional art," musicians are frequently twitted with the reproach that they cannot express emotions *definitely*. If Mark Twain was right, then painters and actors are no more successful in this respect than musicians. But shall we accept the dictum of the great humorist? (He, by the way, was bitterly in earnest this time in his favorite rôle of exposing what he honestly believed to be a sham.)

The problem is of tremendous importance to all musicians.

During the winter of 1876-77 I lived in Munich, where I often took my meals in the Pschorr Brewery restaurant, little dreaming that upstairs there lived a boy of twelve (Richard Strauss) whose life I would write many years later. In this restaurant I got acquainted with an ambitious young painter with whom I often discussed art and music. One evening he asked if I could tell him of some book which would teach a painter to express emotions. I promptly replied: Darwin's *Expression of the*

Emotions in Man and Animals. He got a copy and afterwards told me it was just what he wanted and helped him a great deal.

DARWIN'S BOOK ON EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Have you ever read this book? If not, do so by all means, especially if you are, or intend to become, an opera singer. But even if you are a pianist or a violinist, or an amateur, and therefore not expected to make faces and gestures to express feelings in public, you should study the great naturalist's masterly exposition of his subject and profit by his striking pictures. His volume should be used as a text book in all schools—not only music schools. It teaches the art of close observation, without which no one can win real success in anything.

Up to a certain point Darwin's conclusions tally with Mark Twain's. He once showed a number of photographs (supposed to indicate certain emotions) to twenty educated persons. Some of the expressions were at once recognized by most of these; but in regard to others the most widely different judgments were pronounced.

"I had hoped," Darwin remarks, "to derive much aid from the great masters in painting and sculpture, who are such close observers. Accordingly, I have looked at photographs and engravings of many well-known works; but, with a few exceptions, have not thus profited. The reason no doubt is, that in works of art, beauty is the chief object; and strong-

ly contracted facial muscles destroy beauty. The story of the composition is generally told with wonderful force and truth by skillfully given accessories."

On another page he says: "Painters can hardly portray suspicion, jealousy, envy, etc., except by the aid of accessories which tell the tale; and poets use such vague and fanciful expressions as 'green-eyed jealousy'."

Other ways, however, were found by Darwin for illustrating the definite expression of diverse emotions, by studying them in children, in the insane, in animals and among diverse races of mankind. But what I wish to emphasize here particularly is that it is unfair to taunt music with inability to portray certain emotions definitely when the other arts are in the same boat.

Take love for instance. "Can music express the emotion of love?" Foolish question. Love is not an emotion. It is a most complicated state of mind—perhaps the most complicated of all states of mind. I ought to know what I am talking about, for I have written two books on love, comprising over 1200 pages. Among its *ingredients* are certain emotions and moods which music *can* express: the excitement of pursuit, the delicious longing, the ecstatic joy of success, the abysmal grief of failure or loss. *There* music is in its element—more poignant and powerful than any other art in expressing the intense romantic emotions that are characteristic of the master passion.

There is no mistake about the old saying that music is the most emotional of the arts. It certainly is. Everywhere and always its aid has been invoked by men and women when anything happened that appealed deeply to their feelings, such as weddings, funerals, church service, military rejoicing, or the dejection of defeat—such climaxes in life simply *demand* music for their adequate expression and their intensification. There is nothing indefinite about a waltz or a dirge; nothing to leave to accessories, though these help. The feeling inspired by a waltz, by the way, has been happily defined as “the joy of dancing without legs.”

MAKING A “HOLY SHOW” OF THEMSELVES

To me the most deplorable and discouraging thing about our musical life is that emotion is usually absent in its higher phases, where it ought to be most abundant. There is emotional fervor in jazz and in cheap variety shows. Fervent feeling is displayed at community gatherings of untrained singers and at amateur musicals where enthusiasm is the only redeeming feature. But in our recital halls the emotional thermometer is usually somewhere near the freezing point, if not below zero. I often feel like putting on my overcoat.

It is generally held and proclaimed that emotional singing or playing cannot be taught; that the faculty for it must be inborn and cannot be acquired.

Fiddlesticks! It isn't usually taught, that's sure; but that does not prove it *cannot* be taught. What I say, and would like to proclaim from the housetops, is that there is a technic for teaching expression, as much as there is a technic for digital dexterity; and that, while it presupposes that dexterity, it is of infinitely more importance.

Why then do the piano and violin and voice teachers pay so little attention to it? Why do they harp forever and ever on skilfully trained fingers and agile vocal cords, to which they devote years of training, while the emotional side is allowed to take care of itself?

Because the express train carrying the music teachers has been running many years on the wrong track. Time was when students of music had their minds trained simultaneously with their fingers, their bow arms and vocal cords; but in the mad race for dazzling tricks of virtuosity, mind and emotion were thrown overboard as needless baggage—except by the greatest artists.

The irony of fate has brought it about that the dazzling pianists have been beaten in their own specialty by the pianolas and other player-pianos. The virtuosic express train has been wrecked, and musicians are now struggling wildly to get on the new band wagon where Mind, and his wife, Emotion, sit enthroned.

The Cult of Mind and Emotion is now the order of the day. But nobody knows how to teach the technic of these things because they have so long

been treated as unteachable. Imagine—*unteachable!* In our schools and colleges the mental side of a hundred different things is taught successfully to millions of boys and girls, but the higher, *brainy* side of *music* is supposed to be unteachable! Ye gods! Do the music teachers realize that they have been making a “holy show” of themselves?

They have dishonored and insulted the very word *Technic*—degraded it to mean merely the mechanical side of playing or singing—“that which can be taught” they idiotically add.

Not that they *are* idiots, mind you. Many of them are very clever men and women. The idiocy lies in parroting foolish maxims, like “Art begins where technic ends”; a maxim which takes for granted that technic (or technique) has nothing to do with the high-art side of music.

“Art begins where technique ends,” Professor Leopold Auer parrots on page 154 of his admirable book “Violin Playing as I Teach It.” Yet on page 142 of the same book he says: “The average student pays no attention to the difference between a *piano* and a *pianissimo*, to making sharp distinctions between *fortes*, *fortissimos* and *mezzo fortes*, and above all he ignores the value of the *crescendo*, preceded by a *poco a poco*. As a rule he proceeds under the impression that *crescendo* means ‘louder’ and that *diminuendo* stands for ‘softer,’ whereas these shadings should be carried out by degrees leading up to the *fortissimo* or down to the *pianissimo*, as the case may be.”

Now, the shadings here referred to are entirely a matter of emotional expression, and *they can be taught*, just as well as diatonic and chromatic scales can be taught, and trills, and harmonics, and arpeggios, and bowings, and all the technical tricks of pianists and singers.

Five hundred years ago De Muris wrote that there are three tempi in music—slow, medium and quick. Three tempi! Today there are three hundred, including all the subtle nuances of so-called “tempo rubato,” which add so much to the graceful elasticity and the soulfulness of music.

The same with the matter of loudness. “In ancient days,” the late Louis C. Elson wrote, “expression in music was almost always synonymous with loudness.” I fear that with most opera and concert goers it is still so. Loudness surely can be taught, and so can its infinitely varied degrees, which modern compositions demand. One of the chief reasons why modern music moves our feelings more than does the music of two or three centuries ago is that there are so many more degrees and shades of loudness and pace.

There is a technic for teaching these things, although it is still in its infancy. See some interesting hints under the word *Ausdruck* (Expression) in Dr. Riemann’s *Musik-Lexikon*.

TONES THAT MOVE TO TEARS

I must take back what I have just written about loudness being the average concert and opera goer's sole idea of expression. He is also emotionally aroused and thrilled by *sheer beauty of tone*. And a voice like Patti's or Caruso's intoxicates the most critical hearers as well as the gaping multitude. It enthalls by its sheer loveliness, as does a beautiful flower. Have you ever been moved to tears by the unspeakable glory of a bed of flowers, like Burbank's Shirley Art Poppies? I have, and I have often been moved to tears by the sheer loveliness of a great singer's or pianist's or violinist's tone.

Is there a technic for teaching and acquiring a tone so beautiful that it moves us by its sheer beauty? There is; but—again I say—it is still in its infancy. Vocalists may find many valuable hints in David C. Taylor's *The Psychology of Singing*. His arguments go far to convince the reader that the old Italian method of teaching singing dispensed with nearly everything that makes up the mechanical technic of modern vocal instruction. It had a technic of its own, embodied in these words of Tosi (1647-1727) to the student: "Let him hear as much as he can the most celebrated singers, and likewise the most excellent instrumental performers; because from the attention in hearing them one reaps more advantage than from any instruction whatsoever."

Mr. Taylor holds that just as a singer can, by

an effort of the will, sound a note of any particular pitch, so he can imitate, with the aid of the mind's ear, the tone quality of an admired vocalist, his vocal organs adjusting themselves spontaneously in both cases, without any anatomical teaching. If this is the true method for securing voices which move to tears by their sheer beauty, it points to the vocal technic of the future, which will be largely psychological: *mixing music with brains*.

HOW CARUSO COLORED HIS VOICE

The technic of emotional expression offers many interesting problems to be solved in the studios of the future. Ways will be found to teach students not only to sing beautifully but to arouse audiences to enthusiasm by expressing the passions dramatically. In tragic operas there are often situations where honeyed tones are out of place. A dog can bark angrily as well as joyously, and also howl dismally; even a lowly mosquito can sing furiously when a net prevents her from getting at you. But singers are usually as monotonous as crickets or frogs.

They deliberately avoid everything that isn't "pretty." I often want to throw things at the smirking idiots.

To be sure, we must not blame them alone. They haven't been taught the technic of singing emotional songs, like Liszt's *Loreley*, Schubert's *Erlking* or *Death and the Maiden* or the *Doppelgänger*. In

other words, they haven't been taught to mix brains with music.

There are two very illuminating sentences in Salvatore Fucito's splendid book on *Caruso and the Art of Singing* which point the way to the technic of emotional expression. "The vocal artist must remember that he does not sing *with* his throat but *through* it; that tone is produced by the breath, the vocal motor, as it comes into contact with the vocal cords; and that the other vocal organs, *acting as resonators, merely vary the quality of the tone.*"

The second sentence is: "Caruso was able to bring those resonant vocal organs from which issued his extensive, rich, and powerful voice so completely *under the control of the will* that the slightest modification in the movement of his lips and cheeks, *accompanying the swiftest transition in the emotions and passions represented*, gave him tones of infinite color."

Read these two sentences again and again. Signor Fucito was Caruso's coach and pianist for a number of years.

After this chapter was written there appeared another excellent book by an Italian which throws a flood of light on Caruso's voice. It is by the laryngologist Dr. Mario Marafioti and is entitled *Caruso's Method of Voice Production* (D. Appleton & Co.). I call particular attention to pages 6, 51, 100-104, on which the author demonstrates that *resonance is the most important factor in voice production.* "The massive volume and the rare

quality of his voice—its exceptional characteristics—were due to the resonance of the body, which was like that of a Stradivarius violin.” “His entire body, in fact, in its large and solid frame, was a striking resonator for his voice.” His very bones “had a power of resonance which was startling.” By all means read also pp. 271-2 in which Dr. Marafioti tells what wonderful use Caruso (who was his patient) made of his tongue to make the mouth more resonant. Such revelations are worth a thousand ordinary music lessons.

PIANO TOUCH AS A MENTAL ACT

The greatest pianists are always those who most love a beautiful tone and know how to produce it. Rubinstein “seemed to caress the sounds from the instrument where others struck them.” He told his pupil and biographer, “Alexander” McArthur, who asked him if his tone and touch were natural: “Partly natural, partly acquired. I have spent thousands of hours in an endeavor to find this tone and that, and since I can remember I have been working at the problem.”

When Amy Fay heard Rubinstein play Liszt’s arrangement of *The Erlking* she was overwhelmed with emotion. “Where the child is so frightened, his hands flew all over the piano, and absolutely made it *shriek with terror*. It was enough to freeze you to hear it.”

In Miss McArthur’s book on Rubinstein no sen-

tence impressed me so much as this: "Personally I found, when first I attended his lessons, that it was more by *willing the tone* than by hitting the note in some certain way that I succeeded in doing as he wanted."

That's another case of *mixing music with brains!* And Hans von Bülow, in his edition of Beethoven's sonatas, emphasizes the mental element by marking certain passages "quasi flute," "quasi clarinet," etc. Evidently he believed, like Taylor, that by intensely imagining and willing a certain tone you can produce it.

A PIANO FOR A BRAZILIAN MILLIONAIRE

An incident that once happened to me in London throws further light on this interesting topic. As I was walking down Piccadilly I met my old friend, J. C. Rodrigues, the Brazilian millionaire and at one time owner of a musical paper in New York.

"You are just the man I want to see!" he exclaimed. "I am on my way to buy another grand piano for one of my country places in Brazil. Come and help me select one."

We went to the leading English, French and German houses and finally to the leading American. I had hardly struck a few chords of the American when I said to Rodrigues: "There's your piano!" And he agreed with me.

Now, I am not a professional pianist. I have never taken a lesson, can play only slow pieces with-

out hitting more wrong notes than Rubinstein, and my fingering would drive a piano teacher to drink, in spite of Anderson and Volstead. But one thing I have: a touch that not more than half a dozen of the great pianists I have heard in forty years have equalled. At one of the English piano houses that Rodrigues and I visited, the boss, who happened to be present, remarked that although I was evidently not a trained pianist, he would pay me a handsome sum if I would take the job of showing off his pianos.

I mention this incident because nobody ever taught me my rich, mellow, varied tone. It is entirely the result of mixing music with such brains as I have. Ever since my boyhood I have delighted in experimenting at the keyboard, to coax lovely tones from the keys, just as I worked hard in my garden to raise the most beautiful and fragrant flowers. Not being a teacher, it never occurred to me to analyze my way of doing it; and when I came across Tobias Matthay's extraordinary book: *The Act of Touch in all its Diversity: An Analysis and Synthesis of Pianoforte Tone-production* (London: Longmans), I was mighty glad I had not done so; for I doubt if I could have even found the time and patience of this eminent teacher, who has shown in this book that there are no fewer than forty-two distinct kinds of key attack the pianist has to know about if he would consciously and deliberately produce tones of all shades of beauty and emotional expressiveness—harsh, mellow, brilliant, etc.

The technic of emotional expression so far as piano-tone is concerned, is revealed in detail by Mr. Matthay. The key, he teaches, must be pressed, not struck. The quality of tone varies with the speed of the descent of the key. The more gradually it descends the more lovely is the tone. The more rapid the key depressed, the harsher is the tone quality.

A NEW WONDER WORLD

These few lines give a glimpse of the author's method. In his preoccupation with this method he, unfortunately, makes a serious omission—a blunder which, however, let me add at once, does not impair the value of what he teaches regarding tone, so far as it goes. His mistake consists in his attributing everything to the fingers, forgetting the all-important function of the sustaining pedal in enriching piano tone. (By "sustaining pedal" I mean the right pedal, not the middle one.)

By raising the damper with his right foot a pianist makes it possible for a number of strings to vibrate in sympathy with the one he strikes with the aid of this or that key. These sympathetic tones are called overtones. Their combinations are countless, and different kinds of touch can be made to produce the particular tone-color the player has in mind and wishes to make audible. Thus the adroit use of the "damper" pedal (as it is foolishly called—"damper-lifting" would be less misleading)

constitutes in itself an unrivalled technic of emotional appeal.

Paderewski owes much of his success to his ingenious and artistic way of mixing brains with his pedaling. He has opened up a new pianistic wonder-world of which even Liszt and Rubinstein only dreamt—a wonder world in which rainbow colors chase one another across the keyboard and the audience is thrilled by one delicious emotion after another. *

ACCENT DISSONANCES BUT NOT BARS

Beethoven at the piano always accented suspensions, thus, in the words of Schindler, imbuing his playing "with a characteristic pregnancy quite different from the smooth, shallow performances which never reach the height of tone-speech"—that is, eloquence.

Liszt, in his lessons, ignored digital technic. "I am not a piano teacher" he used to say. What he taught was accentuation, phrasing, interpretation, eloquence. Like all pianists who are genuine musicians he specially *emphasized discords and individual dissonant tones*.

By such subtle and ever-varied accents a pianist gains a firm grip on the feelings of his hearers.

*I have dwelt at considerable length on the function of the sustaining pedal for enriching tones and chords in my *Chopin and Other Musical Essays*. An excellent book is *The Pedals of the Pianoforte* by Hans Schmidt. Rubinstein said that "the pedal is the soul of the pianoforte."

Piano methods of the future will have many pages on eloquent accents; also, on the art of phrasing. In this the late Dr. Hugo Riemann has achieved splendid results. His *Vademecum der Phrasierung* is a valuable contribution to the technic of emotional expression.

Has it ever occurred to you that breathing is a thing to be studied by pianists as well as by singers? Phrasing is a matter partly of accent partly of breathing. On this point there is an eloquent page by Harold Bauer, in Cooke's *Great Pianists on Piano Playing* which I must cite. It ought to make the average pianist use his brain and do some thinking:

"It is impossible to witness a disastrous accident without showing mental agitation and excitement in hurried breathing. Joy, anger, fear, love, tranquillity and grief—all are characterized by different modes of breathing, and a trained actor must study this with great closeness."

He goes on to explain that a pianist may be said to breathe his phrases, varying his expression from tranquillity to the climax of dramatic intensity, just as an actor does. I may add that if I had a pupil I would advise him to study acting too. The teachers of *that* art never make the foolish assertion that there is no technic for the mental side of their art—in other words that expression is not teachable.

In several of the following chapters further instances of emotional technic will be given. In conclusion let me call attention to one of the most

lamentable habits of musicians—that of accenting the first beat of every bar. This brainless habit reduces all music to the level of the dance hall. The division of music into bars separated by a vertical line was originally made to help beginners and amateurs. It was then converted into an inexorable fetish, the hollowness of which it took the combined strength of Wagner and Liszt to demonstrate.

To accent the first beat of each measure rigidly, monotonously, persistently when playing, not a dance piece but a poetic, emotional composition is a stunt of which only a musician is capable; actors, even poor ones, do not accent their lines in that metronomic, machine-like way. If they did they would be hissed off the stage.

"The bar line is only for the eye," Hans von Bülow told his pupils. "In playing, as in reading a poem, the scanning must be subordinated to the declamation; you must *speak the piano*.

"Ignore the bar line if you would sing or play with expression," was one of Wagner's fundamental maxims. Concerning Liszt, Anton Seidl wrote: "The strange illustrative movements of his long baton startled and puzzled the musicians until they learned that *the musical bars were not dominant* but the phrase, the melody, or the expression; but soon the glance caught the attention of the men, they became infused with the magical fluid; and the master had them all in his hands."

Liszt speaks of "the incessant mobility of the rhythms" of Gypsy music, "the fiery eloquence of

its phrases, the expressive accent of its declamation." Let me repeat here a paragraph from one of my books: "If some one incidentally discovered a treatise on piano technic by Liszt, how the translators would pounce on and publishers fight for it! Yet here is Liszt's book on Hungarian gypsy music, untranslated and neglected, though from it teachers and pupils could learn more about the soul of music—the qualities which made Calvé and Paderewski, the De Reszkes and Seidl, so superlatively successful—than from a million "methods" and text books. The stubborn refusal of players and singers to use their minds, to read books that would help them to win success, is an inexplicable phenomenon."

CHAPTER III

CAN POETIC PLAYING AND SINGING BE TAUGHT?

There is an old story of a great actor who, after trying in vain at a rehearsal to make one of the minor players deliver his lines effectively, exclaimed: "Why can't you speak the words exactly as I do?" Whereupon the other retorted: "If I could, I wouldn't be doing small parts for fifty dollars a week."

Funny as the speeches of Mark Twain and Artemus Ward are in books, they were infinitely more so as delivered by these great humorists themselves; and the same lectures with which they moved audiences to laughter or tears can easily be delivered in such a way as to make everybody yawn.

As with actors and lecturers, so with singers and players. It sounds well to scold the public for running after grand opera stars instead of going for the sake of the operas themselves, regardless of the casts. But, as a matter of fact, the same opera that arouses our enthusiasm when sung by "stars" is likely to bore us to extinction when done by mediocrities, however careful the ensemble may be.

Thousands of pianists can play the pieces of Chopin and Liszt correctly, so far as the printed notes are concerned; but when Paderewski plays a

Chopin scherzo or a Liszt rhapsody we are enchanted by a hundred poetic details of phrasing and expression which entirely elude ordinary pianists, who, therefore, *do not give us the real Chopin and Liszt.*

As long ago as 1752 Bach's friend Quantz wrote: "The good effect of music depends almost as much on the player as the composer. The best composition can be spoiled by a bad rendering, and a mediocre composition is improved by good expression."

It is needless to say that Mark Twain could never have taught any other man to speak exactly as he spoke. Nor did Liszt, though surrounded by talented pupils, succeed in making any of them play as poetically as he did. That, however, is a question of genius. The individuality of genius cannot be duplicated.

At the same time, is it not possible to teach the poetic style of playing? By poetic I mean imaginative, artistic, emotional—a style of playing having the charm and eloquence of expression. The object of this chapter is to show how much can be done in this direction by a competent teacher or conductor.

EXPRESSION MARKS INSUFFICIENT

Doubtless most readers of this book know that it was not customary in the days of Bach and Handel to add expression marks to the written or printed music. But to infer from this, as many

musicians have done, that these masters and other good musicians of their time, played without expression, is ridiculous. The same Quantz, whom I have just quoted, says on this point: "A good execution should also be full of variety. You must continually oppose light and shade; for you will certainly fail to be touching if you play always either loud or soft—if you use, so to speak, always the same color, and do not know how to increase or abate the tone when required. You must therefore use frequent changes from forte to piano."

So far as playing with expression consists simply in carefully attending to all the expression marks printed in modern music it can, of course, be easily taught. But these printed marks are only the crude guides to artistic expression. As Franz Kullak remarked, even with an exact observance of them, a "soulful" rendering is not attained. "As long as nothing more is done, the interpretation will usually prove stiff and void of expression, and the hearer may well say, 'The performance did not move me.'"

It is related of Chopin that he sometimes amused himself and his friends by playing one of his pieces with careful attention to every printed note and sign, yet with the soul left out. What this means we can infer from what Berlioz wrote about Chopin: "Unfortunately, scarcely any one besides Chopin himself can play this music and give it the character of something unexpected, unforeseen, which is one of its chief charms. *His performance is veined with a thousand nuances in the move-*

ment. He holds the secrets of these nuances, which cannot be pointed out. There are incredible details in the mazurkas."

It must not be inferred from these remarks that the printed expression marks are of no great importance. They should be carefully attended to. Beethoven, who was the first composer to use them freely, used to get furious if this was not done. But he realized also that they gave a mere outline of his emotional intentions, and, when he played or conducted, he read much "between the lines," using the pedal, for instance, much more freely than the printed page indicated, as well as a flexible tempo (miscalled *rubato*), and rhetorical pauses, like those used with such poetic effect by Paderewski.

AN ENGLISH PIONEER CONDUCTOR

In considering the important question what there is in a musical score beside the printed expression marks to guide us to its "soul," we can get some illuminating facts from the experiences and writings of one of the most famous of English choral conductors, Henry Coward. An Oxford Doctor of Music, he spent twenty years as a musical critic, during which time he had ample opportunity to note the shortcomings, as well as the merits, of British choral associations.

In his book on *Vocal Technique and Interpretation* he gives an amusing account of the kinds of voices to be found in most large choruses; there

are voices—"weak and quavery, worn and tinny, harsh and shrill, strident, metallic, shouty, throaty, cavernous, hooty, scoopy and nondescript." Add that few conductors paid much attention to shading, clear enunciation, or characterization, and it seems no longer strange that choral concerts have interested music lovers less than orchestral concerts and recitals by famous soloists.

What Dr. Coward found wanting in choral singing were, in a sentence, expression, color, interpretation, real musicianship. He set himself the task of supplying these, and succeeded admirably, his Sheffield choir becoming a world-famed organization.

He proved that poetic singing can be taught. How did he do it?

In the book just referred to and in another book, *Dr. Henry Coward, the Pioneer Chorus Master*, by J. A. Rodgers, luminous details are given which cannot be commended too highly to all who are concerned with choral music.

Not a second is wasted at rehearsals presided over by Dr. Coward. Every bar of music is numbered, so that, in case of repetition, all can find the place desired at once. The words have to be memorized by members of the choir in advance, at odd moments; and by way of securing distinct enunciation Dr. Coward makes the members read (not sing) the words aloud. Something is wrong, he maintains, if the hearers have to refer to their book of words.

In order that all may be able to follow the conductor's beat the sopranos and altos are not allowed to wear their hats.

One of Dr. Coward's specialties is a "floating pianissimo"; a pianissimo concerning which Mr. Rodgers says that "If a clock cannot be heard ticking through a chord of this tone, sung by three hundred voices, the conductor fines them down until the test is passed."

As for the other dynamic extreme, "he never shoots his bolt too soon," but builds up his climaxes in such a way that the apex is held in reserve until the moment when it can be superimposed with overwhelming effect.

From the orator Dr. Coward has learned how to enhance the effect of vocal utterance by a hundred little devices of stress, lingering a fractional silence before a salient word, a change of timbre reflecting the emotional meaning of a word or phrase; and from the actor he has caught the secret of characterization.

A NEW WORLD OF VOCAL EFFECTS

In characterization, particularly, lies the art of poetic singing of the future, as taught by Dr. Coward. Not only, when the words are derisive, does he make the choir sing derisively, but, in Berlioz's *Faust*, for example, he makes the choristers enter into the real spirit, successively, of the peasants, drunken soldiers, rollicking students, de-

vout villagers, and finally, the lost souls in Pandemonium, snarling out their unholy gibberish.

At performances of this work of the great Frenchman under Dr. Coward "it was seen by contrast how ridiculous it was for a choir to laugh like Lord Dundreary with a sort of throaty gurgle; how inane it was to depict wine-cellar revelry with voices suggesting the sentimental drawing-room tenor, and how insipid it was to portray fiendish glee within hell's portals with the staid decorum of a body of local preachers of irreproachable character."

In his pages on characterization, Dr. Coward gives minute directions how all these realistic tonal effects can be secured from a body of singers, thus opening up "a new world of vocal effects."

"Contrasts of tone-color, contrasts of differently placed choirs, contrasts of sentiment—love, hate, hope, despair, joy, sorrow, brightness, gloom, pity, scorn, prayers, praise, exaltations, depressions, laughter, tears—in fact, all the emotions and passions are now expected to be delineated by the voice alone. It may be said in passing, that in fulfilling these expectations choral singing has entered on a new lease of life. Instead of the cry being raised that the choral societies are doomed we shall find that by absorbing the elixir of characterization they have renewed their youth."

By thus emphasizing characterization—that is, the poetic, dramatic side of choral music, this pioneer conductor succeeded in making new members

of his choir *eager to attend rehearsals*, and "Sven-galized" or hypnotized them into enthusiastic response to his plans and directions.

MESMERIZING ORCHESTRAL PLAYERS

It would be bestowing altogether too much honor on Dr. Coward to intimate that he was the first conductor who could thus hypnotize, or mesmerize, a body of musicians, imposing his will on theirs and making them do exactly what he wanted in revealing the expressive, poetic side of music.

Long before him, Wagner, Liszt, and some of the great conductors trained by them (among them Bülow, Hans Richter, Seidl, Mottl, and Nikisch) did that very thing with orchestral players.

In looking through some old clippings from my criticisms in the *New York Evening Post* the other day, I came across two which vividly show how much the effect of a composition depends on having a conductor who can teach and compel his men to play poetically. When that giant among orchestral interpreters, Gustav Mahler, was at the head of the New York Philharmonic, that organization was not, as it is now (thanks to Josef Pulitzer's gift of nearly a million dollars) equal in all respects to the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Yet I wrote: "Wilhelm Gericke and his Boston Orchestra once played Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* overture in such a way that it suggested to a wag (W. J. Henderson) Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*. When

Gustav Mahler is at the helm of the Philharmonic we are with Wagner on the vessel which was twice tossed by violent storms; the salt spray flies into our faces and the shrill whistle of the piccolos is heard in the masts. It is very exhilarating."

Wilhelm Gericke was an excellent drill-master; under him the famous Boston Orchestra played with more precision than ever before or after him. But he had not the gift of teaching his musicians to play Wagner's music poetically. Let me paste in here the second of the clippings referred to:

"Of all the Boston conductors, Mr. Gericke is the most Bostonese. He has a splendid orchestra, the parts of which fit into each other almost as exactly as the parts of a seventeen-jeweled American watch. Precision, refinement, delicacy, intelligence are always present and so far as these qualities are called for in Wagner, last night's playing was perfect. But where we have been accustomed to look for an ocean tidal-wave there was nothing but the gentle ripple of a brook. The *Tannhäuser* overture was followed by what was announced as the Bacchanale in the Paris version, but it proved to be the Boston version. The 'growing abandon,' the 'wild excitement' and the 'frenzy' of the dancers were hardly hinted at, and the way in which the brass was suppressed was simply outrageous. Mr. Gericke seems to look on the brass very much as a New York reformer does on Tammany. Unjustly so. In the hands of injudicious leaders the brass is an evil, but there are places where you cannot have

too much of it and the wildest point of the Bacchanale is one of them. It should sound like the noisy orgies of drunken Oriental Coribantes, and not like amiable picnic music."

"HIDDEN AWAY AMONG THE NOTES"

The most compelling mesmerist among all the great conductors I have ever known was Anton Seidl. It was he who had taught me what to expect in the music so unpoetically interpreted by Mr. Gericke. Victor Herbert, who at one time was a member of the Seidl orchestra, bears witness to his "all-powerful, impelling, yet unfathomable power of control," which "imperiously commanded his followers in the orchestra by first awakening their entire interest and then spurring them on to efforts that they could make under the bâton of no other man."

In his splendid essay on Conducting printed in *Music of the Modern World*, Seidl wrote: "One must have heard a Beethoven symphony as interpreted by Wagner to learn how much there is *hidden away among the notes* of that classic giant, and how much can be *conjured out of them*."

What made Seidl the greatest operatic and orchestral conductor of his time was that he "conjured out of" the scores of Wagner, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Dvorák and other emotional composers, the many things "hidden away among the notes."

When Angelo Neumann, two years after the first Bayreuth festival, set out to make the cities of Europe acquainted with Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*, Wagner insisted on his taking Seidl as conductor because, as he wrote, "none of the other conductors has such a clear understanding of my tempi, and the harmony between the music and the action. I have coached Seidl personally, and he will conduct your *Nibelung* performances as no other can."

A hint at the secret of Seidl's success in making his singers and players bring out the poetic details of the scores he conducted may be gathered from what Jean and Edouard de Reske wrote about him after his death: "How dear Seidl's whole heart was in his work! What trouble he took over every detail! At rehearsals he was conductor, stage manager, mechanic, electrician—all in one; and when it came to the performance the artists had only to look at his authoritative glance and inspiring beat to gain absolute confidence, and feel that they would be ably steered through any difficulty that might arise."

In the Seidl Memorial volume other great singers—Lilli Lehmann, Lillian Nordica, Marianne Brandt, Emma Eames, Giuseppe Campanari, Anton Schott—bear witness to the valuable aid they got from Seidl in realizing Wagner's poetic and musical intentions. Each member of the orchestra might have told the same story. Neumann, in his *Personal Recollections of Wagner*, relates that his

Nibelung orchestra at first was only "fairly good," but that in the course of the tour it "grew more and more finished until it finally reached the acme of perfection." Which proves that a man like Seidl can teach singing and playing to operatic singers and orchestral players, just as Dr. Coward's achievements proved—as the achievements, also, of the Bach choir at Bethlehem, Pa., under Dr. Wolle, of the Mendelssohn choir, in Toronto, under Dr. Vogt, have proven—that expressive, poetic singing can be taught to choirs.

PROGRAM MUSIC

Choral and operatic conductors enjoy the great advantage of having poems, or librettos, to guide them and make the desired effects clear to their singers and players. This advantage is wanting in the case of purely instrumental works classed as "absolute" music; and this helps to explain why symphonies and sonatas are so often played in a dull, unimaginative manner. Beethoven evidently realized this disadvantage in the last years of his life when he seriously considered a plan of providing his instrumental works with poetic titles, like those favored by romantic composers, notably Schumann.

It is well known that Schumann added the poetic titles to his pieces after he had composed them. The more usual way is to conceive a picture or poetic incident before composing the music appro-

priate to it. Of this process the symphonic poems of Liszt and Saint-Saëns offer particularly striking examples. Let me name two of the best.

Liszt's *Mazeppa*, which Professor Niecks has justly called "the most daring piece of tone-painting in existence," translates into tones the wild flight through valleys and forests of the frenzied horse with *Mazeppa* bound on his back; the suffering and despair of *Mazeppa* lying naked and bleeding on the ground when the three days' race is ended; and the final rescue of the victim and his elevation to the rank of a ruler of the Ukraine tribes.

The *Danse Macabre* of Saint-Saëns is no less vivid. In it Death is personified in a fiddler who summons the skeletons from their graves for a midnight dance, which ends with the cock's crow at dawn.

These "programs" present several advantages. They fertilize the composer's imagination (nearly all of the *best* works of Mendelssohn, for instance, are program music); they greatly increase the interest of the audience in the music performed; and—what interests us particularly, as part of our argument—they make it easier for the conductor to *teach his players* to enter into the poetic spirit of the composition.

WHAT LISZT TAUGHT

If a great orchestral or choral conductor is able, as I have now abundantly shown, to teach large

bodies of men and women to sing or play with poetic expression, it ought to be self-evident that a piano or voice teacher can do the same thing with individual pupils.

Liszt, to be sure, though he had the most talented pupils in the world, used to say that these things cannot be taught. Now, there are only two things an instructor can teach: technic or expression. Liszt, as all his pupils testify, paid no attention to technic, taking that for granted; yet all of them agree that they derived much benefit and inspiration from his teaching, which, therefore, was along the line of expression. Some details regarding his method are presented in my *Success in Music and How it is Won*; and I advise teachers particularly to read Amy Fay's chapters on Liszt as a teacher, in her *Music Study in Germany*.

Liszt, she remarks, "develops the very spirit of music in you." "He presents an *idea* to you, and it takes fast hold of your mind and sticks there." "His touch and his peculiar use of the pedal are two secrets of his playing, and then he seems to dive down in the most hidden thoughts of the composer, and fetch them up to the surface, so that they gleam out at you one by one, like stars."

If teachers and their pupils could be persuaded to read more books about the great players and composers, poetic playing and singing would be more in evidence. Many valuable hints may be found in such works as Huneker's *Chopin* and Ashton Johnson's *Handbook to Chopin's Works*. If

pupils were directed every time they are learning a new piece by this poet of the pianoforte, to read what is said about it in one or the other of those books (containing information and comment culled from many sources) their interest in their task would be doubled, and the results surprising. For the Beethoven sonatas Elterlein's book will perform a similar service. On Schumann the only book of the kind I know is in German only: Bernhard Vogel's *Robert Schumann's Klaviertonpoesie*. It should be translated and brought up to date by the addition of the many illuminating things Schumann wrote in his private letters regarding his piano pieces—remarks invaluable for those who want to learn how to play them poetically. In the meantime read the splendid article on Schumann in Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

CHAPTER IV

RICHARD WAGNER AS A TEACHER

“Richard Wagner was one of the greatest teachers of singing the world has even seen. The success of those who came under his instruction proves this even more eloquently than his writings. A few words of explanation would often enable them to overcome a seemingly unsurmountable difficulty. He paid much attention to proper breathing, but his usual method was to approach the matter *from the mental side*; to thoroughly understand a passage was, in his opinion, to master half its technical difficulty.”

These words appeared as a footnote in my *Wagner and His Works*, the first edition of which is dated 1893. It includes a considerable number of details regarding Wagner's method of teaching his singers and orchestral musicians to grasp and execute his intentions; but I did not have at that time the advantage of utilizing some books that have since appeared, notably Lilli Lehmann's memoirs and, above all, the illuminating volume, entitled *Richard Wagner an seine Künstler*, which contains invaluable hints in abundance.

It is a book of 414 pages, containing his letters to the artists who assisted him in giving his three

Bayreuth festivals, the first of which was devoted to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the second to his four Nibelung dramas, the third to *Parsifal*. The number of letters in this book is 360, and there is another volume in which are printed his letters relating to the purely business affairs of the festival. These two books give a vivid idea of Wagner's amazing capacity for hard work.

Edison once said that genius is one per cent. inspiration and ninety-nine per cent. perspiration. On reading Wagner's Bayreuth letters, one realizes that this is not such an exaggeration as at first it seems to be. After devoting a quarter of a century to the conception and composing of his four colossal Nibelung operas, he was confronted by a task that would have appalled any one but himself—the Herculean labor of finding musicians who could sing and play them.

FROM "RIENZI" TO "LOHENGRIN"

It is not easy for us to comprehend the difficulties that confronted Wagner. Today, opera singers of the dramatic class, are expected as a matter of course to do the Wagner rôles. But when he began to write his operas there were no Wagner singers. *He had to create those, as well as the operas!*

His *Rienzi* was all right, for that was more or less in the prevailing Meyerbeer style; yet even that made what he himself called "extravagant demands on the singers." The *Flying Dutchman* went much

farther away from the styles to which the singers were accustomed, while *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* seemed to cap the climax of novelty and difficulty. To singers of our day the vocal music in *Lohengrin* seems quite simple and tuneful, even in the second act, which foreshadows the Nibelung style; yet the great song writer, Robert Franz, though he liked this opera, wrote that "it is difficult to understand how the singers can memorize melodic phrases like these, apparently written so much against the grain."

What would he have thought of *Tristan and Isolde*?

It was not only the unprecedented intervals in Wagner's melodious recitatives that the singers found it difficult to master. He had to teach them the art of harmonizing their acting with their singing. Before his day, opera singers were not expected to be actors and actresses, except in a very vague and general way. A few did act, but even these would have opened wide their eyes at Wagner's demands. His essay on the proper performance of the *Flying Dutchman*, which every student of operatic singing should read and re-read and ponder and again ponder, gives a vivid insight into his conception of the intimate union of singing and acting. Six solid pages are devoted to the Hollander alone, demonstrating his every movement and gesture, in close association with the music; and the other characters are similarly treated.

There is also an essay on the proper performance

of *Tannhäuser*, which is even more valuable. Wagner wrote it because it was not possible for him to travel from city to city and instruct the singers and conductors personally as to the best way of learning to perform this opera.

HOW TO STUDY AN OPERA

A glaring light is thrown in this essay on the difference between the old way of staging an opera and his new way.

The old way was to send to each singer his part, which he was expected to study at the piano till he knew it by heart. Then all the singers were assembled for a rehearsal, during which the stage manager gave them a few hints as to the acting of their part.

That was not Wagner's way of teaching his singers. Before they got a glimpse of the music, he had them meet the conductor and stage manager and read in their presence their respective parts, even the chorus being present. His directions were that this should be done repeatedly, till each of the vocalists got into the spirit of his or her part, just as if they were going to act it without music. After that, they were to receive their vocal parts, which they would then study with greatly increased understanding, and therefore greatly increased interest and chances of success.

Concerning *Lohengrin* the most valuable pedagogic hints are to be found in a long letter written

by Wagner to Liszt when that opera had its first performance anywhere, at Weimar. Naturally, the orchestral splendors and beauties of the score were fully revealed under the direction of Liszt, whose conducting was as wonderful in its way as his piano playing. But he could not create competent singers. Wagner himself realized that he could not "expect the Lord to work private miracles" in his behalf by making singers of the kind he needed "grow on trees." Yet it annoyed him exceedingly to find that those who heard his opera at Weimar were impressed by the music, but not by the action and the singing on the stage. "If at the performance of my *Lohengrin* the music *alone*—nay, as a rule, the orchestra *alone*—attracts attention, you may be sure that *the singers have fallen far below the level of their task.*"

How true this was, we who have heard such singers and histrionic artists as Emma Eames, Lillian Nordica, Johanna Gadski, Marianne Brandt, Jean and Edouard de Reszke in this opera can attest.

"TRISTAN AND ISOLDE" AND "DIE MEISTERSINGER"

A few good singers did "grow on trees" for Wagner after the Weimar première of *Lohengrin*, which occurred in 1850. Yet as late as 1863 (when he had already reached his fiftieth year) his *Tristan* was given up as "impossible" after fifty-four rehearsals in Vienna, where the Opera had, as he him-

self wrote, "better singers than the theatres elsewhere." It was useless for him to point out that Viardot-Garcia, in Paris, had once sung the part of *Isolde* in the second act at sight for him. She was not available in Germany, and Paris, at that time, would not have understood his opera.

At last he found in Schnorr von Carolsfeld an ideal Tristan. To him, after his death, he devoted a long and instructive essay, in which he pointed out how Schnorr contrasted with the tenor who sang *Lohengrin* at Weimar. By his wonderful dramatic and vocal art Schnorr "held the rapt attention of the whole audience in such a way that this orchestral symphony seemed, in comparison to his song, like the simplest accompaniment to an operatic solo, or rather, disappeared as a separate factor, and seemed to be part and parcel of his song."

Much of this success was directly due to Wagner's teaching. "Never," Wagner wrote, "has the most bungling singer or player accepted so much detailed instruction from me as this vocal hero, whose art touched on supreme mastery."

Instructive glimpses of Wagner as a teacher are given in Ludwig Nohl's *Neues Skizzenbuch*. They relate to the rehearsals, in Munich, of *Die Meistersinger*, an opera in which "every step, every nod of the head, every gesture of the arms, every opening of the door, is musically illustrated." Two details may be quoted from this Boswellian book:

"Wagner showed the impersonator of Beckmesser, at the point where he finally is driven

frantic by Sach's persistent singing and hammering, how he must suddenly rush at the 'malicious and insolent' cobbler. It was a positively tigerlike, quivering jump, which Höltzel had trouble to imitate even partially.

"If anything in the orchestra displeases him, which happens not infrequently, he jumps up as if a snake had bitten him, claps his hands, and calls to the orchestra, after Bülow has rapped for silence: '*Piano*, gentlemen; *piano!* That must be played softly, softly, softly, as if it came to us from another world.' And the orchestra begins again. 'More softly still,' cries Wagner, with an appropriate gesture. '*So, so, so, gut, gut, gut, sehr schöne.*'"

ANOTHER HERCULEAN TASK

Each of the operas so far considered called for only about half-a-dozen artists. But when Wagner had completed the *Ring of the Nibelung* he needed no fewer than forty-nine artists who could act as well as sing. All these required his personal instruction—and got it!

On this point the collection of letters to his Bayreuth artists, which is referred to at the beginning of this article, leaves no doubt. "I am obliged," he wrote to the famous tenor, Albert Niemann, "to devote this whole winter to visiting all the German opera houses, big and small, in order to find out about their singers."

When he had found out, had laid his plans, he

invited the chosen ones separately to his home at Bayreuth and gave them preliminary personal instructions regarding their parts. None of them could be trusted to find their way unaided in this new realm of art. To the celebrated Betz he wrote in 1874: "I therefore expect you this summer, at your convenience, to come for the first perusal of your part at the piano, to lay the foundation for study." Karl Hill he begged not to look at the music of the parts assigned to him till he could come to Bayreuth, "because I prefer that you should make your first acquaintance with them through me, since I consider myself the only one qualified for this."

HINTS TO FAMOUS SINGERS

Most of the vocalists whom Wagner engaged were already famous, and it was his desire (as it was Liszt's practice with his pupils) to take technical skill for granted and confine his instruction to questions of interpretation; yet sometimes he had to go back to first principles, as in the case of Georg Unger, whom he complimented on having mastered what he had been told about the character of his part, but advised to devote more time to vocal exercises in order to get rid of the throaty quality of his voice.

He evidently took this singer because no better was at hand. Unlike the average teacher, he did not believe that by means of exercises a silk purse could be made out of a sow's ear. "I have never

discovered," he wrote to Hans von Wolzogen, "that a person afflicted with throaty tone and careless enunciation has learned how really to sing. On the other hand, I have at various times come across singers with good tone emission and enunciation whom I had to teach little besides correct phrasing, by telling them when and where to take breath, in order to get from them the best they were capable of. I believe that in this matter the most important thing is *praxis* and living example."

Wagner did not like the explosive style so common among German singers, any more than he did a throaty voice. During the rehearsals for the Bayreuth festival in 1876 he had a notice posted behind the scenes beginning with these words: "To the Singers: Distinctness—the big notes come of themselves, the small ones and their text are the main thing"—words aimed at the explosive singers, whose method resulted in a choppy effect which gave the erroneous impression that there is no smooth legato in Wagner's vocal style. We who have heard Lilli Lehmann, Nordica, Eames, Gadske, Schumann-Heink and Jean de Reszke, among others, know how ridiculous this notion was.

MATERNA AND SCARIA

Having had the privilege of attending the first Bayreuth festival (as well as the second), I can attest from personal experience that only a few of the artists whom Wagner had so industriously

selected for these occasions were capable of singing his "speech-song" with a legato that *melodized* it. One of these few was Materna, who created Brünnhilde. In a letter to her, written in November, 1878, he expressed his "lingering joy" at having found in her "one of those whom I really could teach something."

Wagner knew that every year many fine voices are ruined in the German opera houses by the enormous demands made on them—the necessity of not only singing very often, but in widely different styles. When he discovered Scaria, the great bass, who, also, could sing with a true melodious legato and at the same time enunciate the text with astonishing distinctness, he had this danger in mind. "Were I a Meyerbeer," he wrote to him (meaning if he were as rich as Meyerbeer), "I would at once take you away from the opera house in order to preserve your whole strength for my cause."

"Short rehearsals which do not fatigue" are, in Wagner's opinion, "the only ones that lead to success." He cautioned Materna to keep her voice fresh. "Do not let the winter repertory fatigue you too much. Take it easy and keep your precious vocal powers untired."

When he engaged Materna to sing selections from his music dramas in Vienna, he wrote to her: "You must not fail to sing the scene by heart. That increases the effect, even at a concert."

TIME WASTED ON MEDIOCRITIES

With artists like Materna and Scaria, or Niemann and Betz, it was worth while for Wagner to give his precious time to instructing them. But many of those he was called upon to teach were quite undeserving of such a privilege. On this point Anton Seidl, who knew all about it, as he lived with Wagner five years, speaks with bitterness in his essay on "Conducting."

"All who were closely associated with Wagner," he writes, "remember how impressively and with what a variety of voices he was able to sing the different rôles for those who had been chosen to interpret them, and how marvellously he phrased them all. It is also known, alas! how few artists are able to imitate him. It always makes me sad when I think of how I saw Wagner wasting his vitality, not only by singing their parts to some of his artists, but acting out the smallest details, and of how few they were who were responsive to his wishes.

"Those who can recall the rehearsals for *The Ring of the Nibelung* and afterwards *Parsifal*, at Bayreuth, will agree with me that much was afterwards forgotten which had laboriously to be thought out in part later. . . .

"But only the few initiated know how many of Wagner's days were wasted in useless study with different Siegfrieds, Hagens, Hundings, Sieglindes, etc. I also wish to recall the rehearsals for *Tann-*

häuser and *Lohengrin*, in Vienna, in 1875. Then his was the task of creating a Tannhäuser out of a bad Raoul, of forming a Telramund out of a singer to whom had never been assigned a half-important rôle; and yet when, after a fair degree of success, Wagner asked for consideration on the ground that he had to do the best he could with existing material, the critics fell upon him like a pack of wolves and dogs as a mark of gratitude for his self-sacrificing exertions."

PLAN FOR A HIGH SCHOOL OF DRAMATIC SINGING

The Germans and Austrians have given to the world many musical geniuses, but their greatness was seldom realized by their contemporaries. To singers of our day it seems incomprehensible that Wagner's plan of establishing a high school of dramatic singing at Bayreuth and of producing, under his personal supervision, all of his operas in succession, came to naught because so few were interested in it or discerned the tremendous advantages offered.

With four exceptions, he even had to pay the artists who sang at the Bayreuth festival performances. The others did not realize that the fame they got from being chosen by him, and the blessing of his personal instruction outweighed a thousand times what they could do for him.

Few even took the trouble to hand down the illuminating remarks he made to them about his

rôles. Fortunately, his "Boswell," Heinrich Porges, issued a book on the *Nibelung* rehearsals of 1876 which contains many valuable hints. This was done at Wagner's special request. He also secured for Bayreuth the services of Julius Hey, whom he held in the highest esteem as an "ideal teacher," and who subsequently published a method of German singing, which is the fullest embodiment of Wagner's thoughts on the training of the voice for the stage. Particularly valuable are the chapters on the treatment of the vowel and consonantal sounds peculiar to the German language.

LILLI LEHMANN AND THE FLOWER GIRLS

One of the four artists who realized the tremendous advantage of studying under Wagner himself, and who therefore refused payment for singing at Bayreuth, was Lilli Lehmann. She was too young, in 1876, to do the part of Brünnhilde, of which she subsequently became the greatest of all interpreters; but she sang the rôle of the first Rhine Maiden most charmingly. For the *Parsifal* festival Wagner intended at first to secure her as leader of the Flower Girls, but changed his mind because she would have been too conspicuous by her beauty of person and voice.

For this chorus he wanted an ensemble of girls absolutely even and flawless. Besides Lilli Lehmann, he got Humperdinck and Porges to help him find and train such a bevy of girls. Conductor Levi

was told that if one of them could not sing the high B flat softly and tenderly, "away with her!" And to Lehmann he wrote: "A single shrill voice would spoil everything."

It was difficult to secure such a chorus—but then, everything about Wagner's works was difficult at that time. Lilli Lehmann points out, in her Memoirs, how even Materna, with her powerful voice and physique, needed all her strength to carry out Wagner's wishes. Another famous singer, Frau von Voggenhuber, stipulated that she must not be called on to sing for a whole week before and after her every appearance as Isolde! Gradually the singers learned to cope with all the difficulties, and in 1890, Lehmann points out, she and Vogl appeared in New York as Isolde and Tristan three times in six days. "Thus do times, views and capabilities change."

Every student of Wagner's art should read the chapters on Bayreuth in Lehmann's Memoirs (the English version of her book is entitled *My Path Through Life*). She gives instances showing how artists to whom their parts were as riddles, quickly learned to answer them under Wagner's guidance. She devotes a whole page to describing in detail how he coached one of the prima donnas in the part of Sieglinde, concluding with the words: "The way Wagner, with his poor figure, acted this, was indescribably touching in its expression. Never has any Sieglinde even remotely approached him in this part."

Thus did Wagner teach all his singers, women as well as men, to act and sing their parts. No detail was neglected. In a letter to Fricke he calls attention to the fact that the twenty-four flower girls in *Parsifal* must enact something "quite unlike a ballet"; and he adds, "I can show you how."

HOW AN ACTOR LEARNED FROM WAGNER

One of the most famous German actors, Emanuel Reicher, has related in a Viennese journal how he once saw Wagner coach his wife, Hedwig Reicher-Kindermann. She had been suddenly called upon to take the part of Erda in *Siegfried*. Mottl was to have played the piano at the special rehearsal, but as he was delayed Wagner himself sat down at the instrument. For a time he seemed satisfied, but when she sang the lines, "Why came you, stubborn wild one, to disturb the Wala's sleep?" Wagner complained of insufficient expression. "My wife sang the lines again, but he was still dissatisfied. Again he stopped, in his familiar, impatient and rather rude manner. He struck the piano keys, looked at my wife with a furious mien, and sang the music with an incredibly unpliant, disagreeable voice, even off the pitch, but his eyes, his look, the intense grief depicted in his face, the poignant accentuation of the words 'to disturb the Wala's sleep'—these things made an indelible impression. An elemental tragic emanation came from the master's soul to mine. I was like one bewitched,

and whenever I recall the scene I am affected the same way. Many a successful moment in my tragic impersonations has its origin in what I saw on that occasion."

By far the most emotional and inspired song ever composed by Brahms is one almost unknown—the gruesome Scotch ballad *Edward*. I shall never forget Dr. Wüllner's singing of this, with Tilly Koenen. His art was simply terrible—as terrible as Salvini's when he smothered Desdemona—growing more so as, in successive verses, the secret is gradually wrung from him that he has slain his father—at the bidding of the mother, at whom he now hurls his curses. The eminent German baritone, Eugen Gura (one of the Bayreuth artists), relates in his *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben* how Wagner once gave him a lesson regarding the emotional coloring of those increasingly agonized "ohs" in Loewe's setting of this ballad. Could Wagner have heard Wüllner he would have been paralyzed with joy at having found at last his ideal of emotional singing—the art-singing of the future.

CHAPTER V.

THE SUPERLATIVE IMPORTANCE OF TEMPO

"Does this music annoy you?" I was asked one day when my little nephew had started a Strauss waltz on a talking machine to entertain him.

"No," I promptly replied, "the music doesn't annoy me, but the tempo does. Nobody could dance at that pace, and the music loses all its charm by being taken so fast."

I shall never get over my indignation at a joke played on me many years ago by a music teacher. I used to play the violoncello, and once at a concert this woman unfortunately played the accompaniments. My principal number was a Bach air. When we rehearsed, she started to play it at double the proper speed, but, on being remonstrated with, she slowed down. At the public performance, however, either from nervousness or because she thought she knew better than I, she again put on full steam and I simply had to follow, the result being that this piece, which always was encored when I had an intelligent pianist, got a mere scattering of applause. The audience evidently was a better judge of tempo than that teacher, who is now, I generously hope, in a better world.

A friend of mine called one evening on a family that had just bought a player-organ. He found the whole family playing cards except one member, who had put in the *Tannhäuser* overture and was playing it fortissimo and prestissimo from beginning to end! Nobody paid any attention to the racket; but when the visitor, who happened to be an organist, sat down and played the same piece with the proper tempi and varying degrees of loudness, the card players stopped their game and stood around enjoying the music.

SEIDL AND GRANADOS

Concerning the same overture, Anton Seidl once told me a story that threw light on a certain class of German conductors who missed the essence of Wagner's music. Ferdinand Hiller was one of them; but one day, after he had heard Seidl conduct the *Tannhäuser* overture with the proper tempi, he was frank enough to exclaim, "Ja, so gefällt sie mir auch!" (Ah! That way I like it, too.)

Wagner himself relates in one of his essays that this overture, which, under his own direction, in Dresden, took twelve minutes, was made by one conductor to last twenty. Sometimes, in listening to one of his operas, he was almost driven to despair by the incorrect and monotonous tempi.

Everybody has read about the organ grinder in Milan who had put up a placard on his instrument

reading "Pupil of Verdi," and who, on being questioned, explained that Verdi had once stopped him and shown him how fast to play one of his tunes. The story may be true. A composer tortured by an incorrect tempo is capable of worse things than that.

One of the saddest tragedies in musical history was the death of the great Spanish composer, Enrique Granados, who was one of the victims of the *Sussex* disaster. His life had been a hard struggle to support his six children, and the production of his *Goyescas* at the Metropolitan Opera House had been his first great opportunity. Even this was marred by a faulty production of his opera. For the last repetition, which he hoped would be better than the others, he invited Paderewski, Schelling and myself, with our wives, to his box. It proved to be the worst of the five performances, and I shall never forget the look of annoyance and almost anguish in his face whenever the conductor made a blunder in the choice of his tempo. The composer's hands nervously indicated the right tempo, but I was the only person who could see those distressed hands.

YANKEE DOODLE AND THE NATIONAL HYMN

One of the most encouraging signs of musical progress in America is the fact that *Yankee Doodle* is from year to year being heard less frequently. In the most remote rural regions bandmasters, ama-

teurs and even the irrepressible, half-witted whistlers are apparently beginning to realize the hideous vulgarity of this detestable tune, than which nothing could be less appropriate on dignified patriotic occasions. "Shrill and shallow" the late W. F. Apthorp called it. One might as well class the flea among useful domestic animals as this jerky, skipping thing among our national tunes. Thank heaven, it is not of American origin. Indeed, it was originally sung in derision of Americans, who surely did not deserve such an insult—but, hold; yes, they did, for they subsequently, in the latter part of the Revolution, adopted it as their own—"a melody taken from the enemy," as Louis C. Elson has remarked.

Many years ago I waged a violent newspaper war with Mr. Jenks, of the *Boston Transcript*, in regard to *Yankee Doodle*. His apology for it culminated in the remark that it is not unlike the melody of the *Hymn to Joy* in Beethoven's ninth symphony. In my retort I admitted that only one step separated the two—the step from the sublime to the ridiculous.

What has all this to do with the question of tempo? Well, a few years ago, in reading Mrs. Wodehouse's excellent article on song in the new edition of Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, I came across this very interesting footnote regarding the Russian National Hymn (before Bolshevism came to rule), which is attributed to Lvov: "It has recently been stated that Lvov was

not the true composer of this hymn, but merely took the melody of the trio of a *Geschwindmarsch*, composed by F. Bogdanovitch, bandmaster of the St. Petersburg regiment of the guards, and published in a march collection in 1822. The notes are identical, the only change being made in the time."

That "only change," however, transformed this tune from something ridiculous into the most sublime of all national hymns. Fritz Kreisler, who nearly lost his life by a Cossack lance, agrees with me as to that, and many others do, I am sure. Now, try it as a *Geschwindmarsch*—that is, a quickstep—and note how all its nobility and beauty vanish. Pondering on this amazing difference, it occurred to me that *Yankee Doodle* also might possibly be ennobled by playing it more slowly. I tried it, with rich, stately harmonies, and lo and behold, the taint of vulgarity was gone!

EARLIEST USE OF TEMPO MARKS

The superlative importance of tempo is abundantly demonstrated by these examples. When did musicians begin to appreciate this importance? Evidently long before what we call art music came into existence. American Indians, for example, were found addicted to singing their songs of religion, love, war, hunting and so on in varied tempi, some of them fast, others slow. In such books as *American Primitive Music*, by F. R. Burton, and *The Indian's Book*, by Natalie Curtis, may

be found many examples to which accurate metronome marks have been affixed by the editors, as well as general indications like "in moderate time," "with spirit," "very rhythmically," "very slow," "rather fast."

Folk songs of European countries are sung now, as presumably they always have been, slowly or fast, according as they were concerned with sad and solemn topics or with gay and festive ones. There were no rules to instruct these singers in matters of tempo. They followed their own taste and judgment.

In the same way, the composers of art music, even as late as the time of Handel and Bach, left matters of pace very largely to the taste and judgment of the singers, players and conductors. It is true that, about the year 1600, such words as *allegro*, *adagio*, *andante* came into use; but these, for a long time, merely indicated the general emotional character of a piece, *allegro* meaning, literally, cheerful; *adagio*, easy; *andante*, going; *largo*, broad; and it was only gradually that these Italian words got their present meaning the world over, of fast, slow, moderately fast and very slow, respectively.

It is particularly interesting to note Bach's attitude toward these words. In his earlier works he frequently used them, but in his later manuscripts they are seen only occasionally. Evidently he found them too vague to be of much use and pre-

ferred to leave his tempo to the taste and musical instinct of the performers.

Grétry, the eminent French composer, who was born eight years before Bach died, wrote: "I am so convinced of the insufficiency of the customary time indications that I believe it a fact that a composition written in Amsterdam and marked *allegro* would be played only *andante* by the people of Marseilles."

BEETHOVEN AND THE METRONOME

In course of the eighteenth century the longing for something more definite to indicate the tempo in art music became more and more pronounced. It resulted in the invention of the metronome. This little instrument for mechanically beating time as fast or slow as desired, with the aid of a pendulum and clockwork, appealed at once to prominent composers like Spohr, Clementi, Cherubini, Méhul, Moscheles. Beethoven, in particular, welcomed Maelzel's metronome with open arms, and he expected great things of it.

In one of his letters he wrote: "I heartily rejoice that you share my opinion regarding the terms indicating time-measure which have been handed down to us from the barbarous period of music. For, to name only one thing, what can be more senseless than *allegro*, which, once for all, means *merry*, and how far off are we frequently from such conception of the time-measure in that the music

itself expresses something quite contrary to the term? I have often thought of giving up these senseless terms, *allegro*, *andante*, *adagio*, *presto*, and for this Maelzel's metronome offers the best opportunity. I herewith give you *my word* that I will no more use them in my compositions."

For a time he did so, relying on the metronome, but soon he discovered that this, too, fell far short of his expectations, and he came to look on it as a useless encumbrance. Matters reached a climax when his attention was called to the fact that the metronome marks he had provided for a London performance of his Ninth Symphony did not agree with those which he supplied not long afterwards because the others were lost. "No metronome!" he exclaimed. "A man who has the right feeling does not need it; the man who has not, finds it useless; he and the whole orchestra run away from it."

MORE HARM THAN GOOD

For educational purposes the metronome is, of course, indispensable, and as a guide to the manipulators of player-pianos it has its uses, sparing musical people the daily agony of having to hear grotesquely wrong tempi in all directions. But as a guide to artistic interpretation this mechanical time-beater is a snare and a delusion. It is not too much to say that it has done more harm than good. It has helped the survival of mediocre musicians, who, without its aid, would have made such outrageous

blunders that they would have been promptly eliminated from the overcrowded concert halls. It has often failed to indicate correctly even the initial pace desired by a composer; and, furthermore, it is misleading, because in a large hall and with a big orchestra the same piece must be played more slowly than in a smaller hall with a small orchestra.

But the chief damage done by metronome marks lies in this, that they have led mediocre musicians and ignorant critics to suppose that when a composer writes M.M. 104 or M.M. 92 at the beginning of a movement he intends it to be played at that pace *metronomically, through to the end*. This misconception has been a veritable curse in the musical world. It is responsible for a vast amount of dull and dreary playing in homes and concert halls. It has also caused the world's greatest conductors, from Wagner and Liszt to Seidl, Mahler, Weingartner, Nikisch and others to be violently assailed by pedantic professionals because they dared to be interpreters instead of metronomic time-beaters, and has thus discouraged others from following their splendid example. These great leaders have often been derisively called "prima-donna" or tempo rubato conductors by academically minded critics.

WAGNER'S BOMBSHELL

The superlative importance of tempo has been specially emphasized by the great masters. Mozart

said that "the most necessary, the most difficult and the main thing in music is the tempo."

In a letter to me, dated September 24, 1900, Edvard Grieg wrote: "Tempo should be in the blood. If it is not, you may be sure that the other intentions of the composer also will be bungled."

He instances his *Cradle Song*, which he once heard sung just twice as slowly as it should be, to the utter marring of its true character.

Robert Franz used very plain language on this point. Humming the opening bars of Mozart's G minor symphony, he exclaimed: "There! An instinct must tell us that that is the right time. Any one who takes it faster is an ass, and so is he who takes it slower."

The most strenuous of all the great masters in his insistence on the all-importance of correct pace was Richard Wagner. He not only devoted an essay of twenty-six pages mainly to this subject, but frequently referred to it in his other writings, including his letters. To his favorite violinist, August Wilhelmj, he wrote in 1877, "I am busy with the project of teaching young musicians one thing before I die; tempo—that is, interpretation." The following year he urgently advised Angelo Neumann to engage Anton Seidl as conductor for the *Nibelung* performances Neumann intended to give in European cities, on the ground that Seidl knew his tempi better than any one else.

Nine years before that Wagner had fired a bomb into the musical world which created a **panic in**

the camp of the metronomic time-beaters. It was an essay, *On Conducting*, in which he made it clear that these time-beaters spoiled all the music they conducted by their incorrect tempi. "The choice of the tempo," he declared, "tells us at once whether or not the conductor has grasped the true inwardness of a composition."

The choice of the right pace in *beginning* a movement is, however, far from being all that is expected of a conductor. Wagner demanded—and this is the gist of his reform—that, not only in his own music, but in that of Beethoven and other masters, the tempo of a movement should be frequently modified, according to the momentary emotional appeal of the melody. Of this, more in the next chapter.

CAN TEMPO BE TAUGHT?

Wagner's words: "Tempo—that is, interpretation," are of course an exaggeration; for interpretation means also accent, phrasing, dynamic shading, and a number of other things. But his exaggeration does no harm, for it emphasizes the superlative importance of tempo. One thing is certain: a musician who plays a piece too fast or too slowly is sure, as Grieg wrote to me, to bungle all the other intentions of the composer. He shows a lack of what might be called musical instinct.

Instinct is not supposed to be teachable. As a matter of fact, much that is supposed to be instinctive is really acquired by way of instruction;

the song of birds, for instance, as we shall see in a later chapter.

Unless a pupil is entirely without musical talent and taste he or she can surely learn a great deal about pace by listening to concerts and operas done by great conductors, singers and players.

Pupils who run their piano like a sewing machine (to borrow Bülow's happy phrase) are, to be sure, hopeless. In an *Etude* article Constantin von Sternberg once gave this happy description of this species of musicians:

"Like children impatiently nibbling at their dinner, solely for the sake of the dessert upon which all their desires are bent, many pupils and amateurs play the chief substance of their pieces in an indifferent manner, without attention to thematic design, rhythm, tonal beauty, harmonic purity, etc. But when the technical elaborations begin! Then there is no holding them! They have learned from the technic-specialist to play 800 notes per minute, and if they are not going to play every one of them they want to know the reason why!

"Is there a teacher living whose pupils have not asked him for 'something real difficult'? The auditor, poor fellow, cares not a snap of his finger how easy or difficult a piece is. What he is after is an auricular treat; but the pupil-amateur seems imbued with the maxim: 'The listener be hanged!' Motives, themes, melodies, their contrapuntal treatment, imitations, allusions, and the thousands of other musical matters do not trouble him. Like

the victim of a tarantula, he just runs, runs, runs over the keyboard, not caring to be understood, not caring for sense, feeling, poetry, conception, not caring for anything but—speed! He does not even endeavor to please; he means to astonish, to amaze, to stagger!

“Some day these persons wake up to the fact that they are not asked to play as often as they expected ‘with 800 notes a minute’; then they usually ‘go to one of these regular artists to get a little of what they call expression. It’s such a small matter!’ And then the chosen teacher has a beautiful (?) job, for it is so very pleasant to talk rudiments to a person who labors under the delusion of needing nothing more than a few ‘finishing touches.’”

The late W. S. B. Mathews put his finger on another reason why so many players bungle the tempo:

“The amateur plays the difficult parts of his piece more slowly and the easy parts faster. The professional, or artist, does the exact opposite. Why? Because the easy parts of the pieces are the melodies, the sentimental parts, where feeling reigns. The artist is an artist because he feels his music, and he intensifies these parts. The amateur is taken up with the idea of executing something difficult, and he proceeds to execute as well as he can; and not being able to execute the difficult parts quite up to time, he makes up for it by hurrying up the easy parts. Therefore he loses both ends of the intended effect.”

Music teachers who have a genuine gift of tempo themselves, will find in it the least fallible means of estimating a pupil's chances of success. The best music in the world is usually slow music, and a truly musical person greatly prefers a slow piece to a lively one, whereas the ignorant always ask for something "quick and devilish." If, therefore, a pupil shows a preference for quick music and plays everything too fast, the teacher will know that that pupil will never make his or her mark in the musical world.

Always bear in mind the words of Gluck: "A little too fast or too slow spoils a piece entirely." And Mozart's maxim: "It is easier to play rapidly than slowly; you can drop a few notes in passages without anyone noticing it."

CHAPTER VI

THE DISGRACEFUL TEMPO RUBATO MUDDLE

When Edward Bok was editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal* I got a message from him one day asking me to stop on my way home and see him in his New York hotel, as he had an offer to make which would probably interest me. I did so, and he took from his pocket a check for \$100 made out in my name.

"You can have this," he said, "for one word—which is probably a higher rate of pay than any writer has ever received."

"And what, pray, is the word?" I asked.

"The word," he answered, "is 'yes.' I want your permission to reprint in the *Ladies' Home Journal* the article on Tempo Rubato which Paderewski has contributed to your book '*Success in Music and How It Is Won.*' We seldom reprint anything, but that article is so valuable that I wish to make an exception. At the same time I congratulate you on having succeeded better than I, with all my financial resources, in getting an article out of him."

I said "yes" and put the check in my pocket. Then I amused Mr. Bok by telling him what a time

I had had in getting that epoch-making article into the hands of the publishers.

Richard Watson Gilder had, some years previously, turned to me for aid in persuading Paderewski to write an article on Chopin for the *Century Magazine*, he himself having failed utterly, although he was one of the pianist's most intimate friends. My efforts also were in vain, although I went so far as to submit a sheet of several dozens of questions to be answered—a method by which I had succeeded in coaxing out of the equally coy Dvorák an article which Sir George Grove said was the best that had ever been written on Schubert.

In talking with Paderewski one day about the “tempo rubato” muddle, I suggested that he could do the musical world a tremendous service if he, the greatest living interpreter of poetic, emotional music, wrote a chapter on this subject for the book on which I was then at work.

He promptly agreed to do it. But weeks and months passed; every now and then I got a message explaining the delay. At last the book was all in type, excepting his chapter. I spent a small fortune cabling from Oregon to Switzerland that unless the Scribners had his manuscript in two weeks the book would have to be published without it. He spent a large fortune cabling back to me telling why he had not been able to write it sooner but promising it solemnly on the date I had given. I fully expected further delay, but I knew that if he missed the last available steamer with his manuscript he would

cable the whole article to New York. That would have been just like him. But the manuscript came in time and the book was rushed to the binder.

A MISCHIEVOUS "TRADITION"

It would have been an artistic calamity if the book had appeared without this chapter. Pianists were badly in need of an authoritative opinion on this "tempo rubato" asininity, which has had a simply tragic effect in making the public playing of most professional pianists mechanical, soulless, boresome, detestable, damnable.

What is the "tempo rubato" asininity? It is the "tradition" that Chopin taught his pupils that while the right hand may indulge in poetic license the left hand "must always play in strict time." This "tradition" was taken to Germany by Wilhelm von Lenz, whom John Kautz once happily characterized as "a Russian itinerant amateur, to whom Chopin in his Parisian days had unfortunately given a few lessons—a lickspittle with a lively imagination and a wagging tongue. . . He was a sort of backstairs hero, a retailer of petty gossip; and, like Parley in Farquhar's comedy, a man of 500 principles. That any testimony emanating from such a tainted source should be accepted as evidence requiring no further examination, and the amazing alacrity with which it was taken up, however demonstrably absurd and illogical it should have appeared at first sight, argue a degree of credulity on the part of our German

friends altogether at variance with their reputed thoroughness and acumen. The dictum that the left hand must always play in strict time has been of incalculable harm to the proper understanding of Chopin in Germany."

Quite true. It has been largely responsible for the fact that no German pianist has ever been a great Chopin interpreter. And as Germany for decades literally "set the pace" for the whole musical world, the damage done has been lamentable. The "left hand" doctrine became so popular because it made it so much easier to play Chopin, mechanically, sans brains, sans poetry, sans emotion, sans charm. Anybody can do *that*!

The truth about Chopin's tempo rubato was told by Liszt and Berlioz. Liszt defined it as "a constant rocking, making the melody undulate to and fro, like a skiff driven over the bosom of tossing waves." Does such a skiff "keep strict time," like the alleged left hand? Try it and see!

Berlioz was so impressed by the *lack* of regularity in Chopin's playing that he said he "*could not* play in strict time" (*ne pouvait pas jouer régulièrement*)—testimony worth more than that of a thousand Lenzs and other pupils. Chopin, by the way, never had a single pupil worthy of him. He *may* have told *them* to play like dance masters, knowing that the effort to do anything else only resulted in caricatures.

How the unwary may have been deceived is illustrated in the case of Paderewski when he plays

a Chopin mazurka. His freedom of movement is so natural, so unconscious, that one might easily suppose he was playing in strict time; but any metronome trying to keep pace with his hand—right or left—would soon be landed in a madhouse. He plays Schubert and other composers the same way (formerly to the great indignation of adherents of the German school). At present all the leading pianists and conductors play even Bach and Beethoven in defiance of the metronome (Beethoven, we know to a certainty, did the same thing); and to suppose that Chopin, the greatest poet of the piano-forte, as Schumann called him, followed that mechanical toy slavishly—as if he were playing in a cheap dance hall—is preposterous, insulting, idiotic—there is no word in the dictionary strong enough to use.

A GEM OF INEPTITUDE

But the worst remains to be told. There is another aspect of “tempo rubato” (literally, “robbed time”) concerning which writers and pianists and lexicographers discourse with owlsh solemnity. For example, Mr. Fuller-Maitland tells us in his brief article on Rubato in *Grove* that it “consists of a slight *ad libitum* slackening or quickening of the time in any passage, in accordance with the *unchangeable rule* that in all such passages any bar in which this license is taken must be of exactly the same length as the other bars in the movement, so that if the first part of the bar be played slowly, the

other part must be taken quicker than the ordinary time of the movement, to make up for it; and, vice versa, if the bar be hurried at the beginning, there must be a *rallentando* at the end."

Really! "The *unchangeable rule!*" Whose unchangeable rule? I should like to ask. Upon my word of honor during my forty years of activity as a critic in one of the busiest musical centres of the world, I cannot recall having *ever* heard a player of the first, second, or even third rank indulge in such a ludicrous practice as Fuller-Maitland not only describes, but prescribes, following the example of many others who before him did not have enough sense of humor to balk and laugh at this pedagogic hoax.

Astonishing is the befuddling power of an alleged tradition! Even the great Josef Hofmann has parroted the foolishness condensed in *Grove* into a gem of ineptitude by Fuller-Maitland. Of course, Hofmann does not use any such ridiculous "rubato" as that when he *plays*. If he did, he would not be an artist!

An actor would laugh in your face, or consider you a sad joker, if you solemnly told him that if he spoke a few words or lines slower than the others he must compensate for that by speaking a few words or lines faster, so as to make the whole piece as long as if it were spoken at the same pace throughout. But musicians accept such twaddle with sober mien and vacantly parrot it.

There is something singularly infantile in the

musical mind. Use your brains, for heaven's sake.

Paderewski, in my book, pokes fun at this notion of "compensation." "Some people," he says, "evidently led by laudable principles of equity while insisting upon the fact of stolen time pretend that what is stolen ought to be restored. We duly acknowledge the highly moral motives of this theory but we humbly confess that our ethics do not reach such a high level."

Regarding the "left hand," Paderewski declares that it often "does not play the part of a conductor but most distinctly that of a prima donna." "To play Chopin's G major nocturne with rhythmic rigidity and pious respect for the indicated rate of movement would be as intolerably monotonous, as absurdly pedantic, as to recite Gray's famous *Elegy* to the beating of a metronome." "Our human metronome, the heart, *under the influence of emotion, ceases to beat regularly*—physiology calls it *arythmic*. Chopin played from his heart. His playing was not rational; it was emotional."

One of the principal charms of Paderewski's playing has been the imaginative irregularity of his pace, not only in Chopin, but in all other composers—even Mendelssohn "Every composer," he writes, "when using such words as *espressivo*, *con molto sentimento*, *con passione*, *temperamente*, etc., demands from the exponent, according to the term indicated, a certain amount of emotion, and *emotion excludes regularity*."

BEETHOVEN, WEBER AND WAGNER

It is a singular and very important fact that while the idiotic "left hand" theory was fostered chiefly in Germany, and imposed by it on the rest of the world, the great German composers did not at all favor metronomic regularity of pace. Weber declared war on it, saying there was "not one composition," in which all bars were to be taken at the same rate of speed.

That Beethoven used elastic. inconstant tempo when playing or conducting his own music is attested by contemporaries who heard him often. "He was most particular," wrote Seyfried, "about expression, small nuances, the numerous alterations of light and shade and the *frequent passages in tempo rubato*;" and Schindler wrote: "What I heard Beethoven play was, with few exceptions, free from all restraint in tempo; it was a tempo rubato in the most proper sense of the word, as conditioned by context and situation."

What did Schindler mean by "tempo rubato in the most proper sense of the word?" Fortunately, he does not leave us in doubt. He did not mean any "left-hand-in-strict-time" nonsense, but slight accelerandos and ritardandos of the pace as a whole—"changes in the rate of motion, mostly perceptible only to a delicate ear"—which reminds one of what Gericke said about Wagner's modifications of the pace of his music:

"The most striking thing about it was the sur-

passing delicacy of all the effects; modifications of force and tempo were almost incessant, but were, for the most part, modifications by a hair's breath only."

Composers have a number of signs prescribing temporary changes in the rate of movement, such as *ritardando*, *accelerando*, *stringendo*, *calando*, etc., but these are not enough. Wagner was thrilled by the delicate and subtle lacery of Beethoven's thematic work, and he felt that its correct interpretation called for *modifications of pace equally delicate and so subtle that no marks could indicate them*.

As Anton Seidl, in his splendid essay, *On Conducting*, remarked, "Had Beethoven not become deaf he would have demonstrated by his conducting how insufficient his tempo and expression marks are for the correct interpretation of his symphonies."

How Beethoven himself wanted the changes of pace to be made is indicated by Schindler's reference to the "moderated tempo in the *cantabile* passages of the allegro movements."

Richard Wagner thus had a genuine tradition to fall back upon when he wrote his famous essay *On Conducting*, in which he maintained that the allegro of Beethoven—the "sentimental" allegro he called it, is in reality *a mixture of the adagio and the allegro*. He goes so far as to say that "Even in the allegro, if we carefully note its most significant motives, the dominating feature is the song (slow melody) borrowed from the adagio."

Wherever such a broadly melodious passage oc-

curs in a fast movement the tempo should, as a matter of course, be modified, that is, moderated, in order to reveal its true character.

This is Wagner's idea of "tempo rubato." He declares that in the interpretation of modern music, beginning with Beethoven, such modifications of the tempo are as important as the playing of the correct notes. It is "the vital principle of our music," yet he declares that up to the time when he wrote his essay on conducting (1869), the German conductors had ignored it entirely. He was the first, he says, who dared to take the adagios slowly enough, while, as for the allegros, they were habitually taken by the conductors in an unvarying, monotonous, metronomic fashion which caused them to be looked on by the conductors themselves as monstrosities, and by the public as bores.

LET US DROP THE WORDS "TEMPO RUBATO"

It is fortunate that Schindler did not leave us in doubt as to his meaning in using the word "tempo rubato," for they have been used in the most lamentably confusing ways, meaning several entirely different things; and the worst of it is that in whatsoever sense we accept those two words, they are misleading and ridiculous, and should therefore be dropped. Beethoven protested against their use in his music. Let us all object to their use in any music. My recent renewed study of this subject has made me feel extremely sorry I ever employed

them in my books or criticisms. Let me explain very briefly why.

From the earliest days of its use “tempo rubato” was a misnomer and an absurdity. *It had nothing to do with tempo, but was merely a question of rhythm—of arbitrarily dotted notes or syncopations.* Turk, in his *Klavierschule* (1789), says “it generally implies a shortening or lengthening or a displacing of the *notes*. One *note* is robbed of some of its value and as much is given to another.” In the days of highly ornamental music, when singers and players took many liberties with the printed page, changes made by dotting (lengthening) some of the printed notes and shortening others were not of special consequence; they were, in fact, the proper thing to do. As Couperin (who was born in 1668) remarked, “We write differently from what we play.” Moreover, as the left hand, in these cases, was directed to keep strict time, we see that it is doubly absurd to call this way of playing *tempo rubato*. What is *robbed* is the *rhythmic* value of some of the *notes* in a bar. The proper expression therefore should be *ritmo rubato*.

Knowing these things we can guess how the “tempo rubato” muddle came about. To get away from it entirely let us, I repeat, drop those two words. As the best substitute I suggest *elastic tempo*. Elastic means something which spontaneously returns to its former condition. In other words, you play a bar, or a number of bars, faster or slower and then return to the regular *tempo*.

Thus you have the combined charms of regularity and irregularity.

NOT A NEW THING AT ALL

In this manner pieces were played and songs were sung long before Chopin and Beethoven. Centuries ago good musicians freely used ever-changing tempi.

Frescobaldi three hundred years ago explained in the preface to his Toccatas, that they must not be played in strict time (*a battuta*). "We see the same thing done in modern madrigals, which, notwithstanding their difficulties, are rendered easier to sing, thanks to the variations of the time, which is beaten *now slowly, now quickly, and even held in the air, according to the expression of the music or the sense of the words.*"

Evidently, in those days, Wagner's essay *On Conducting* would not have come as a bombshell, for at that time it was *expected* that musicians should use changeful, flexible tempo.

Extremely interesting from this point of view is a paragraph in *Musick's Monument*, written in 1676 by Thomas Mace, of the University of Cambridge, England: "You must Know, That, although in our First Undertakings, we ought to *strive* for the most Exact Habit of *Time-Keeping* that possibly we can attain unto, (and for severall good Reasons) yet, when we come to be *Masters*, so that we can *command all manner* of Time, at our own

Pleasures; we Then *take liberty*, (and very often, for Humour, and good Adornment-sake, in certain Places) to *Break Time*; sometimes Faster, and sometimes Slower, as we perceive the *Nature of the Thing* Requires, which often adds, much *Grace*, and luster, to the performance."

There's the whole thing in a nutshell!

CHAPTER VII

LINGERING LOVINGLY ON DETAILS

Why is Paderewski the greatest of living pianists?

Because, more than any other, he lingers lovingly on beautiful details in the music he is playing. There are other reasons, but that is the principal one. Linging lovingly on ravishing details is the climax, the last word, the perfection of pianoforte playing.

Perfect technic does not make a perfect pianist. There are hundreds of piano players, male and female, professional and amateur, who can do almost as brilliant technical stunts as the player-pianos, but they are no Paderewskis.

Some pianists are as versatile as Paderewski, playing French, German, Russian and Polish music with equal facility and intelligence; they read at sight as easily as he; they have equally good if not better memories, and some of them excel him in technical stunts. His art of pedaling is, on the other hand, unique, inspired, unequaled. No other pianist has—probably no one ever had—quite his gift for evoking from the piano, with the aid of the pedal, ravishing tints—tints as new as the colors with which Luther Burbank has painted his poppies and gladioli. But his most personal trait is—let me

say it again—the bewitching way he lingers over beautiful details. It is with those exquisite details that he has most frequently thrilled his audiences. As a statesman and orator, let me add, he emphasized “details” which, if the “patriots” had heeded them, would have prevented the nearly fatal over-running of Poland by the Bolsheviki.

In all my life I have never heard a more eloquent speech than the one Paderewski made in Carnegie Hall (preceding one of his recitals) in behalf of Poland. It was an appeal for the starving children that went as straight to the heart as his playing of Chopin’s *Funeral March* or of the thrilling *Preludes in B Minor* and *E Minor* (Op. 28, Nos. 6 and 4), which were played at Chopin’s funeral in Paris.

This sublime speech would have fallen flat if it had been rattled off without pauses, in the way Chopin’s music is usually played by professionals.

THE PIANO NOT A SEWING MACHINE

“Make pauses for breathing,” Hans von Bülow used to say to his pupils. And again: “Do not play too fast. You must bring out the harmonic and melodic beauties, and you cannot do that if you treat the piano like a sewing machine.”

Nine times out of ten when I hear a pianist—famous or infamous—I feel like shouting, after a few minutes ‘You should bring out the harmonic

and melodic beauties and you cannot do that if you treat the piano like a sewing machine."

When you run a sewing machine there is no possibility of introducing special illuminating accents and no advantage in making pauses; but there is in playing the piano. You have read about "eloquent flashes of silence" and doubtless you have heard speeches by famous orators who, just after or before one of their most telling sentences, would stop in order to give the hearers a chance to breathe and prepare the attention for what is coming. If an actor spoke Hamlet's lines, "To be or not to be," metronomically, without pause or lingering over details, would you not feel like throwing a rotten potato at him? I certainly often feel like throwing rotten potatoes at pianists who haven't enough poetry in their souls to linger lovingly over beautiful bars.

In my *Success in Music and How It Is Won* (p. 291), there is a paragraph which shows what Liszt did in regards to this matter, wherefore I beg the reader's permission to quote it: "Liszt taught his pupils the secret of musical rhetoric, the science of eloquence. Among living pianists, Paderewski is almost the only one who fully realizes the value of the rhetorical pause—a thing unknown in the foolish 'sewing-machine players.' Once Fräulein Gaul played for Liszt a piece in which there were two runs and after each run two staccato chords. She played the runs finely, but struck the chords immediately after them. 'No, no!' cried

Liszt. After you make a run you must wait a minute before you strike the chords, as if in admiration of your own performance. *You must pause*, as if to say, 'How nicely I did that!' And he illustrated the point at the piano. 'That,' says Miss Fay, 'is the way he plays everything. It seems as if the piano were speaking with a human tongue.'

A HINT BY A GREAT SONG WRITER

Robert Franz once said to a friend that he did not believe the melody of a song should always "hover over the accompaniment like a butterfly" (what a poetic way of putting it!), but should also appear in the pianoforte part, and that only thus could a poem's possibilities of musical expression be exhausted.

His own short but big song. *The Rose Complained*, illustrates this point admirably. In this song about the rose bewailing its short life the chief melody is, as it should be, in the voice part, yet the piano not only begins it, but at the end brings, as it were, an echo of the melody without the voice. But what I wish to call attention to particularly is the fourth full measure (not counting the opening fraction of a measure). If I were a piano teacher I would devote a whole lesson to the two dissonant C's which in that measure so exquisitely voice the rose's complaint. Those plaintive C's, which most accompanists—even the good one—are apt to glide over carelessly—must be emphasized; they are the

very fragrance of this rose song. The emphasis is partly a matter of accent (very slight), partly of lingering lovingly on the two dissonant notes—not too long, but just long enough. To get it just right you may have to play the measure a hundred times—great pianists do that sort of thing; I have heard Paderewski do it with some measures while visiting him at his Swiss chateau—but when finally the accompanist gets the real poetry of those plaintive C's, Franz's little song is as sure of big applause as the most showy operatic aria. The public never fails to recognize the lovely details if the player dwells on them poetically. That's why Paderewski came, was heard and conquered.

Details like the two dissonant C's in the Franz song may *seem* trifles, but trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle.

A good many persons think musical critics a superfluity and a nuisance. But there is an excuse for them—in fact there are three excuses for them: (1) if they slaughter mediocrities; (2) if they try to discover and encourage genius; (3) if in their comments they dwell lovingly on beautiful details in compositions or their interpretation. In this article we are concerned only with the third of these excuses.

VAGUE ATTENTION

Frank M. Chapman, the editor of that delightful magazine, *Bird Lore*, in a recent number commented on "the vagueness with which most people see

birds." He attributes this vagueness chiefly to "hasty, inadequate and careless observation," and to "a lack of training in the art of seeing things accurately and in detail."

The lack of training in the art of noticing things accurately and in detail is painfully prevalent. One summer I had in front of my residence in Maine a bed thirty feet long and three feet wide filled with Opium, Darwin, Silver Lining and Burbank's Shirley poppies. Many admired them, but few, I am sure, took in all the ravishing details of the Burbank poppies in particular. Most people see flowers only in a vague way; few could sketch or paint what they have looked at, to save their lives. And so with other things visible.

An amusing parlor diversion consists in having half a dozen or a dozen persons look as long as they please at the dial of your watch and then try to draw one just like it. Some will draw Roman figures when yours are Arabic, and almost invariably the figure VI is drawn, too. But no watch ever has a figure VI. Did you know that? Look and see why!

In music there is a corresponding vagueness in hearing, and in the overlooking of details. When you travel on an express train and look out of the window you see many things, but most of them so superficially that they make no special impression. That's the experience most untrained listeners have when they go to an opera or concert. The music just races past their ears and few details are re-

membered. Is it a wonder, when you reflect that in an opera there may be a million notes?

Now there is where the musical critic can make himself useful. Frequent hearing having made him thoroughly familiar with most operas and concert pieces, he has the opportunity to dwell knowingly and lovingly on beautiful details. In writing of *Carmen*, for instance, he can advise the hearer to watch particularly for the glorious music of the love melody sung successively by Escamillo and Carmen, just before he enters the bull ring; or for a dozen other gems.

After a Wagner performance in which Jean de Reszke had the part of Tristan, the critic could dwell admiringly on many details, but particularly on the tenor's utterance of the word Isolde in the last bar he sings, to which reference is made elsewhere.

In thus dwelling lovingly on a single bar in Wagner's wonderful tragedy, what does the musical critic do? He rejoices the heart of the great singer who is glad to be so thoroughly appreciated, and is encouraged by this praise to bestow the same amount of soul-work on other pregnant measures. He rejoices the sympathetic listener who felt as moved as the critic was, but usually is unable to express his feelings as glibly in words; and, furthermore, the critics, by his enthusiastic comments, makes others eager to hear an opera, a single measure of which has such an ocean of meaning—thus

helping along the survival of the fittest in the opera houses.

I have often received letters from readers of my newspaper criticisms or books thanking me for specially calling their attention to beautiful details. In my editorial notes on the songs of Schubert, Grieg and other masters I have always kept this in mind as my most important task; also in my biographies of Wagner, Grieg and Massenet. When a reader writes to me that I have opened up to her or him a new world of beauty and joy by calling attention to the things most to be looked for, I feel I have not lived or written in vain.

COUNT TOLSTOY'S FOLLY

The other day I read an excellent little English book by Percy A. Scholes, entitled "The Listener's Guide to Music." In it occurs this sentence: "A simple folk-song Tolstoy could understand: a sonata or symphony was beyond him. Tolstoy would abolish all complex music because the plain man cannot grasp it at a sitting. The assumption of the present book is that it is better to abolish the plain man—as a plain man. There is a world of beauty lying just beyond the plain man's reach; it is worth a little striving on his part to find the way to that world and enter in."

If Count Tolstoy could have been persuaded to let some one point out to him some of the countless beauties in Wagner's *Siegfried*, and to go and hear

it five or six times, he would have become despairingly ashamed of the incredibly silly comments he made on that sublime masterwork. The same is true of Ruskin and his equally stupid remarks on Wagner's *The Mastersingers*. Strange that minds so huge in their own sphere can be so microscopically small out of their sphere!

CHAPTER VIII

HEART MUSIC AND ART MUSIC

In the days of Czarism, when it was customary to exile criminals and others to Siberia, the Swedish composer Herteveld happened to hear one day in Moscow a couple of the songs that are sung by Siberian prisoners. He was so deeply impressed by them that he made up his mind to make a trip as far as Tobolsk and collect a number of these unique songs. Fortunately he knew the Russian Prime Minister, Stolypin, who was a music lover, and who provided him with an order admitting him to Siberian prisons—a privilege granted to very few, Russians or foreigners, as the government was not eager to have the world know about the cruelties perpetrated in these dungeons.

Armed with this official permit, Herteveld had no difficulty in getting admitted to the prisons. But another obstacle presented itself which he describes in these words: "The prisoners are not permitted to talk with each other, much less to indulge in singing. Music is looked on as entertainment and a prison is no amusement hall. But," he asks, "is not singing much more than a mere amusement? Is it not something that is part and parcel of the human soul? Music, vocal and instrumental, ac-

companies man throughout life. The first sounds the child hears are cradle songs; stirring military marches accompany the young man as he sets out for war; music is heard at social festivities; it resounds at the altar of marriage; and when he leaves this world it sends him a last greeting. The prisoner is deprived of music. He is not allowed to console himself with its strains. Is that not needless cruelty?"

Needless or not, musical prohibition was strictly enforced in the prisons. When asked to sing, the prisoners declined, as they suspected a trap. Here and there, however, the Swede succeeded. In Tobolsk there was a criminal named Muraitshenko, who conducted the church choir of the prison. By him the prisoners were persuaded to sing for Herteveld. The programme included both religious and secular songs, for one voice or two, but mostly for choir. "There were prayers, some of them of wondrous beauty, songs of conviviality and love, bold robber tunes, fiery marches," all of which made a deep impression on the hearer, for they were *heart music*—part of the very lives of these unfortunates.

CHAINS AND COMBS AS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Chains were the only musical instruments allowed in these dungeons. The terrible rattling of the chains was the keynote of the prison songs. "Like a soul's cry of distress, like a groan of despair is the

rattling of the prison chains," says a song of the Ural. But no—there was one other instrument—the comb. Schubert, in merry moments, used to wrap tissue paper around a comb and sing the "Erlking" through it. Terribly different was the effect of the combs as used in Siberian prisons. There were whole comb "orchestras." While some of the men pressed the combs against their lips and blew through them, the chorus hummed with closed mouths and the chains accented the rhythm. It gave Herteveld "the cold shivers."

This chain-march, he adds, "is not for persons with weak nerves. When I heard it in the dark dungeon of Tobolsk it made an overwhelming impression on me. It even moved to tears one of the prison wardens." It haunted Herteveld all night. But a still more harrowing illustration of the demoniac power of music came to him later.

In a prison north of Tobolsk, all the inmates of which had life sentences, he went, in company with the warden, from cell to cell, asking the prisoners to sing. For the reason already given, all of them declined, with one exception,—a murderer, who promised to sing if they would supply him with a balalaika with which to accompany himself.

After some search, one of these instruments was found in a neighboring village. When it was put in his hands his pale cheeks flushed red and he stroked it tenderly. As he had not played for ten years, he begged to be allowed to practice for three days before singing. He wanted to be alone while doing so

and willingly consented to be locked up in the dreaded darkest cell to make this possible.

When he then sang the Siberian "Song of Fate" there was infinite woe in the expression of his voice. Then followed a scene which strikingly illustrated the powerful grip music can take on even a low order of mind.

After the man had sung and played, he begged to be allowed to keep the balalaika a few days longer. When the warden replied that that could not be done, the man acted like a maniac. "I won't give it back, I won't give it back! I'll kill you, but I won't give it back!" It took several soldiers to wrest the instrument from him. He burst out into hysterical weeping as he was led back to his cell.

I wish every one of the many American men who still hold that music is a mere social accomplishment like dancing could be made familiar with facts like these. Perhaps they cannot be blamed for holding such a foolish opinion, for most of the music they hear in parlors is not much above dance music or card playing, from an intellectual and emotional point of view.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM PEASANTS

Let us linger a little longer in Russia for further samples of heart music. I have before me a brochure by Eugenie Lineff which vividly illustrates the difference between heart music and the artificial

products which are so often inflicted on us in music rooms, concert halls, and opera houses. Mme. Lin-eff once brought a Russian peasant choir to America. She made a life study of this branch of singing and deserves praise for her careful phonographic records of Russian peasant melodies.

Most of the "artists," heard in our recital halls sing as if they did not know, or care, what the poem of the song is about. To a peasant singer, on the contrary, the text does not exist without the melody nor the melody without these words. And that makes a difference—Oh! such a difference—in the emotional appeal of singing.

Melgounoff upset the prevalent notion that folk-songs were sung in unison only; he pointed out that often the people sing polyphonically working out the main melody of the song with slight variations for the secondary parts. These parts are *improvised*—and that, again, makes all the difference in the world. It makes *heart music* of the peasant songs.

Mme. Lineff's paragraph on the difference between such improvisational part-singing and our own more or less mechanical way of singing the printed notes is luminous and so instructive that I must quote it. It helps us get at the mineral salts and vitamins of music, and bears a message of tremendous importance. Read it over repeatedly and ponder it in bed before you get up. It may begin a new era in your higher musical education.

"The whole force and beauty of execution by a

good peasant chorus consists in the free improvisation of the various voices the result being that there is nothing mechanical in such a performance. In this lies its chief superiority over a disciplined choir which submits entirely to the will of the conductor and expresses his ideas and feelings. A trained choir may impress us by elaboration of the ensemble, fineness of nuances and beautiful phrasing, but can seldom carry away the listener. The highest praise of such a choir can be expressed thus: 'It sings like one man,' even when there are one hundred, two hundred, or more performers. The conductor, like a mesmeriser, by one wave of his arm, calls forth the most delicate tones from the scarcely audible *pianissimo* to the thunderous *forte*, but the individual feeling of every member is suppressed, it cannot come out when the whole attention is concentrated on the bâton of the conductor.

"The ideal of such a choir is an 'enlightened despotism,' if one may say so. The peasant chorus is based on an entirely different principle. It consists of singers who pour out their *own* feeling in improvisation, they strive each to express his individuality, though careful of the beauty of the performance as a whole. Even the best peasant singers do not like to sing solo. 'It's poor singing one alone' I often heard remarked, 'it's better singing a whole gang of us.'

ART MUSIC MAY BE HEART MUSIC

"This expression 'to sing *in artel*' is characteristic of the popular structure of the song. In a singing '*artel*' or 'gang' each member is a performer, and at the same time a composer. It is true that the leading singer always sets the tone of the song, influences the style of a given variation—whether free or strict—but each tolerable singer can lead the song. While the ideal of the trained choir is the subordination of the whole to the individuality of the conductor, the peasant chorus, on the contrary, aims at a free combination of several individualities into one whole. Each good singer puts himself into his treatment of the main theme, and each secondary voice bears its individual impress, the result being a wonderfully 'animated' performance. A popular chorus does not sing like 'one man,' but like many men, inspired by a common feeling of love for the song, and pouring out in it their griefs and their joys." Heart music!

"It is just because the whole power of the peasant song lies in free improvisation," Mme. Lineff continues, "that the practiced execution of a folk song even by the best artists cannot compare with the genuine peasant performance. . . . The peasants *improvise* the song, while we *learn* it from music. In the performance of the peasants the song flows in a continuous stream; in our singing the division into bars and notes is always apparent. The peasant 'tells' his song in protracted musical

speech—we sing the melody, frequently without knowing the words, and always very badly pronouncing them. The peasant loves his song, is enraptured by it—we condescend to it. I am convinced that, until we live in our song, as every true artist lives in his work, our execution will continue to be weak and pale.”

It would be foolish to suppose that the untutored peasants of Russia and other countries have a monopoly on heart music. Touching as their singing is because it comes from the heart, the songs recorded by Mme. Lineff are after all crushed into insignificance by such an avalanche of emotional despair as is concentrated in Tchaikovsky's *Pathetic Symphony*. “Without exaggeration, I have put my whole soul into this work,” he wrote to the Grand Duke Constantine Constantinovitch. And what a huge, volcanic soul!

Many other creators of art music put all their heart into it. I am always moved when I read what Schubert once wrote in his diary: “My musical compositions are the product of my intellect and my sorrows; those which were born of sorrow alone appear to give the world the most satisfaction.”

The best of Schumann's great songs were written in the year when his ardent wooing of Clara Wieck culminated in marriage. What made these songs so exceptionally inspired was the love in his “heart”—as we will say, though we know that the seat of our feelings is not the heart but the brain. It is in the heart that we are most powerfully affected by deep

or violent emotions; hence it is not surprising that it was supposed to be the seat of feeling by our remote ancestors, who did not know as much as we do about physiological psychology.

BEETHOVEN'S GREAT WORK

Beethoven's greatest work, the Ninth Symphony, is certainly art music. Is it heart music? It was for him when he wrote it, for he put his whole soul into it. For his contemporaries it was only art music, it did not arouse their enthusiasm. Why not? Because they did not understand it. They considered it obscure, unnatural, the aberration of a mind hampered by deafness. Then came Richard Wagner. He understood it. For him it was heart music of the most soulful sort. "Had anyone," he wrote, "surprised me before the open score, as I went over it to consider the means of its execution, and noted my tears and frantic sobs, he would have asked himself in astonishment if this was conduct becoming a royal Saxon conductor."

When it was announced that he had chosen this work for the Dresden orchestra's "pension-concert" for the benefit of the widows and orphans, there was general consternation; it was feared they would go empty-handed. But Wagner taught his musicians the true inwardness of this sublime symphony; for the first time it was shown to be heart music, and as a result the receipts for this benefit concert, following a public rehearsal, broke all records and

Wagner was requested to repeat the Ninth annually at the "Pensionskonzert."

I have sometimes thought that of all compositions which are both art music and heart music the most wonderful is Grieg's song "The Last Spring," as orchestrated by him. Certainly no other so invariably moves me to tears, when played by a good orchestra under a sympathetic conductor. "His Last Spring" would be a better title, for it embodies in tones the musing of a man who knows that he will not live another year. It is ineffably sad in melody and modulation, and the orchestral colors, which fairly shimmer in an unearthly celestial beauty, emphasize its appeal to the heart till it is ready to break.

When the New York Philharmonic Orchestra played this song (which is also wonderful for voice and piano, or for organ) under Josef Stransky for the first time, the audience was so wild with enthusiasm that it simply *had* to be repeated, although encores at these concerts are strictly forbidden. Yet I have heard this same piece played by another good orchestra, under an indifferent conductor, in such a way that there was hardly any applause, and the audience did not know that it had been listening to heart music.

HAND, THROAT, HEAD AND HEART

This brings me to my chief point—the main reason why I am writing this chapter.

Mozart had a delightfully vivid and impressive way of dividing music into three kinds by pointing successively at his hands, his head, and his heart. In the case of a singer it would be throat, head, and heart.

Now there is no doubt whatever that what the public prefers to hear and pay for is heart music, be it Foster's "Old Folks at Home," or Grieg's "His Last Spring" or Tchaikovsky's "Pathetic Symphony." Yet to my sorrow and despair I must say that in pursuit of what Ernest Newman has so aptly called "the melancholy profession of musical criticism," what I hear at recitals and concerts consists chiefly of hand, throat, and head music, even when the compositions presented belong in the realm of genuine art and heart music.

Maurice Renaud, the great French baritone, who put soul into everything he sang, once flung a terrible accusation at recital givers when he said to me: *Les chanteurs n'aiment pas les chefs-d'oeuvre* ("singers do not love masterworks"). There are few exceptions—you can count them on the fingers of your hands. The average professional singer was secretly glad that the war gave her or him an excuse for dropping from his or her list the songs of Schubert, Schumann, Franz and the other great German masters. These classical and romantic songs call for a tremendous amount of study even by the greatest singers. Few are willing to give that study and time, and fewer still, even if they gave the time and study, have genius enough to

appreciate the genius in those master songs and to present them to their hearers as both art and heart music.

ARTIFICIAL CIVILIZATION

In our artificial urban "civilization" we have got away too far from the use of music as a part of our life, as it is or was in the prisons of Siberia and among the peasants everywhere. The main object of our recitals is to show off beautiful voices or clever technic, or to make money, and not to let the public feel the heart in the great art songs.

The pianists are, with some few exceptions, not much better than the singers. I seldom feel the pulse beat of a warm and agitated heart in the pieces I hear at recitals. It is all head work and hands (technic). American pianists in particular, as Ignaz Friedman pointed out in *The Etude*, are "technic mad." They have a long way to travel from the hands through the head to the heart.

I see a ray of hope in the attitude of pianists toward—for example—Liszt's great sonata. The time is not distant when it was treated by most players as mere hand music—brilliant technique. Gradually listeners as well as players began to realize that there is a great deal of brain work in that masterpiece; and in recent years advanced pianists have shown that much of it is also heart music.

CHAPTER IX

WAS LISZT THE PAGANINI OF THE PIANO

Franz Liszt reached the ripe age of seventy-five. He lived a life crowded, as few lives have been, with hard work, romantic episodes, splendid triumphs, deep disappointments. It is not strange that he repeatedly alluded in the letters of his last years to the *tædium vitæ*. He had become tired of life, having exhausted its joys as well as its sorrows. What is strange is that he had an attack of this *tædium vitæ* when he was a mere youth—an attack so severe that he decided to say farewell to the musical world and enter the Church. From his early years his mind had been inclined toward religion; but there were other reasons which affected him at this time, among them a disappointment in love, a long illness, an inborn aversion to the career of a public performer, and the necessity of giving lessons to support himself and his mother in Paris, because his recitals were not well-attended. At one time he was so short of funds that he sold his piano to buy bread.

When we consider the many ways in which Liszt, during his long career, helped along music and musicians, we realize that it would have been noth-

ing short of a calamity if, at the age of twenty-one, he had followed this inclination to become a priest.

What averted the calamity was Paganini's violin playing.

Niccolo Paganini arrived in Paris in March, 1831, on a tour which set all Europe aflame with wonder at the amazing brilliancy of his playing. He performed tricks with harmonics, double stopping and treble stopping, arpeggios, springing bow, together with "guitar effects," pizzicato and arco simultaneously, and other things that astonished not only "the natives" but rival violinists, who could not understand how he did them. Liszt heard him, and like a flash the thought came to him: "What wonderful things might be done with the piano if its technical possibilities were developed as those of the violin have been by Paganini."

He made up his mind to do this himself. Thenceforth he shunned appearing in public or in society, devoting most of his time to experimenting on the piano; and when, after three years of assiduous practice, he gave another recital, the Parisians applauded him as frantically as they had applauded Paganini. He had become the Paganini of the piano, performing feats of virtuosity which no other player could equal.

A FRANK CONFESSION

While the public applauded, the critics jumped on Liszt with both feet, on the ground that he took

liberties with classical works, playing them arbitrarily and introducing inappropriate ornaments. That they were justified in censuring him he admitted four years later, in a letter to George Sand, in which he confessed his guilt in these contrite words: "In concert halls as well as in private drawing rooms I often played works of Beethoven, Weber, and Hummel, and I am ashamed to say that for the sake of winning the applause of a public which was slow in appreciating the sublime and beautiful, I did not scruple to change the pace and the ideas of the compositions; nay, I went so far in my frivolity as to interpolate runs and cadenzas which, to be sure, brought me the applause of the musically uneducated, but led me into paths which I fortunately soon abandoned. I cannot tell you how deeply I regret having thus made concessions to bad taste, which violated the spirit as well as the letter of the music. Since that time absolute reverence for the masterworks of our great men of genius has completely replaced that craving for originality and personal success which I had in the days too near my childhood."

Note the date of this confession—1837. Liszt was then only twenty-six years old, and for the remaining forty-nine years of his life he preserved that "absolute reverence" for masterpieces which he had already acquired when he wrote that letter to the famous French novelist. Yet to this day writers who ought to be ashamed not to know better speak of Liszt as one who, like Paganini, continued all

his life to make the personal display of technical skill the one object of his activity. A flagrant offender is Mr. Fuller-Maitland, who was for some years the musical critic of the *London Times* and was chosen as editor of the second edition of Grove's monumental *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. In the preface to the *Correspondence of Joachim*, he classes Liszt with those musicians who worked "for their own glorification rather than in the cause of legitimate music."

This verdict applies only to the first decade of Liszt's activity as a musician. Concerning the remaining years—nearly half a century—it is an unpardonable misstatement. During that half-century Liszt was the exact opposite of Paganini in everything except in dazzling technical skill as a player.

In 1841, shortly after Paganini's death, Liszt wrote a remarkable essay in which he declared that the death of that Italian violinist signified *the end of virtuosity*: that is, of the display of skill for its own sake and the glorification of the player. "May the artist of the future," he added, "cheerfully drop the vain, egotistic part which, we hope, found in Paganini its last brilliant representative; may he place his goal *within* and not *without* himself; and may virtuosity be a means to him, never an end in itself."

Fétis, the famous Belgian scholar and historian, who wrote a book on Paganini which is filled with enthusiasm for his virtuosity, was obliged to admit

that he was *not a great interpreter*, but was really quite second-rate when it came to playing anything except his own show-pieces. "In his concerts in Paris he thought it necessary to flatter the national feeling by playing a concerto by Kreutzer and one by Rode—but he scarcely rose above mediocrity in their performance." There was a certain "fullness and grandeur in his phrasing, but there was no tenderness in his accents"; no true expression. He never reached the pinnacle of those artists who are interpreters as well as virtuosi—artists who make the public forget the player because he makes the music itself so interesting; just as the greatest actors make the spectators forget them in the characters they personify.

LISZT ADMIRER BY THE GREATEST COMPOSERS

That Liszt, unlike Paganini, was a genuine interpreter was attested to by the great composers of his time who heard him play their works. Even Mendelssohn, who could not be expected to have much sympathy with him, declared, after hearing him perform his (Mendelssohn's) G minor concerto, that "it could not be played more beautifully—it was wonderful."

Schumann wrote to Clara Wieck in 1840: "I wish you could have heard Liszt this morning. He is most extraordinary. He played some of my own compositions—the Novelettes, the Fantasia, the Sonata—in a way that moved me deeply. Many of

the details were quite different from the way I conceived them, but always inspired by genius." In the third volume of Schumann's collected critical writings nine pages are devoted to a eulogy of Liszt, in which he dwells among other things on his incomparable way of playing Chopin's pieces. All this is the more remarkable, because Schumann did not naturally sympathize with Liszt's aims any more than he did with Wagner's, and there was at that time a remnant of Paganinism in Liszt which did not escape his censure.

Chopin, in one of his letters, says, "I write to you without knowing what my pen is scribbling, for Liszt is at this moment playing my études and he transports me out of my proper senses. I should like to steal from him his way of playing my pieces."

When Grieg took the manuscript of one of his violin sonatas to Liszt in Rome the great pianist played it at sight—both piano and violin parts. "He was literally over the whole piano at once, without missing a note," Grieg relates in a letter, "and how he did play! With grandeur, beauty, genius, unique comprehension. I think I laughed—laughed like an idiot."

Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin, Grieg, represent sufficient diversity of style to indicate Liszt's versatility as an interpreter. He had, as Germany's chief historian of music, Professor Hugo Riemann, has pointed out, "a previously unknown capacity for entering into the peculiarities of the most widely separated epochs, styles, and individualities."

Without doubt Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, and all the other masters who wrote piano pieces would have been as delighted with Liszt's interpretation of them as were those just named. Berlioz confessed that Beethoven's Sonata, Opus 106, was a riddle to him till Liszt solved it. "He is the pianist of the future."

Concerning the same sonata, and Beethoven's Opus 111, Wagner declared that Liszt first enabled him to understand them. In regard to his playing of Bach's C sharp minor prelude and fugue Wagner wrote, "I knew, of course, very well what was to be expected of Liszt at the piano, but what I heard when he played this piece I had not anticipated, although I had studied Bach thoroughly. This experience showed me how slight is the value of study as compared with revelation."

Obviously, if Liszt was the Paganini of the piano, he was at the same time infinitely more than that—so much so that in the minds of those who knew the real Liszt, Lisztism soon came to mean the exact opposite of Paganinism—the art of an interpreter versus that of a mere virtuoso.

Wagner's judgment is particularly interesting. He first heard Liszt play in Paris in 1841—the very year of Liszt's essay on Paganini; and to his horror, he heard him play a fantasia on Meyerbeer's *Robert the Devil*, as an encore at a concert devoted to Beethoven! But he realized, too, that Liszt was not to blame. The public simply yelled and clamored for that show piece till he sat down, visibly

annoyed, and muttering, "I am the servant of the public, as a matter of course," played the piece called for.

"Thus," Wagner adds humorously, "all guilt has to be atoned for in this world. Some day Liszt will be obliged in heaven to play before the assemble angels his fantasia on the devil! But that will probably be the last time!"

Poor Liszt! The world made it very hard for him to be good, artistically and otherwise.

And yet—there is a point of view from which even the playing of that fantasia on a Meyerbeer opera may be justified. Liszt had previously revealed to the Parisians what astonishing sounds and combinations can be evoked from the piano. Beethoven's compositions gave him no opportunity to exploit these new pianistic discoveries. Therefore we must not be too hard on the Parisian audience for clamoring for a specimen of the latest pianistic improvements.

In Italy, even Liszt could have given no recitals at all had he not played his brilliant operatic fantasias. He tried the Chopin études, but was informed that "studies" belonged in the studio, not in the concert hall. Let me cite one more historic fact by way of showing how difficult it was for Liszt, at that time, to be an angel or a model of good taste. In 1837 a charity concert was given in Paris at which six of the greatest pianists of the day appeared: Chopin, Czerny, Pixis, Herz, Thalberg and Liszt. Each had his own piano—and what

do you suppose each one played? A set of his own variations on the march from Bellini's opera, *I Puritani*! Liszt, who came last, looked on the thing as a joke, amusing himself and the audience by giving a sort of "review" of the style and mannerisms of his colleagues.

THE PIANO AS MINIATURE ORCHESTRA

One of the results of Liszt's temporary craze over Paganini was that he made a transcription for piano of that violinist's *Twenty-four Caprices*. Not long afterwards he made an arrangement for the piano of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*—a significant act, for it calls attention to the trend of Liszt's treatment of the piano. He could not write more idiomatically—that is pianistically—for the piano than Chopin was writing at that very moment; but he could transfer orchestral scores to the piano and make them sound as idiomatic as Chopin's pieces for piano or Paganini's for violin. Therein lies one of the great achievements of Liszt, with which he influenced all the pianists and composers that came after him. His own words on this point are interesting: "We make broken chords like the harp, long-drawn tones like the wind instruments, staccati and a thousand kinds of passages which formerly it appeared possible to bring forth only from this or that particular instrument." As one of his pupils exclaimed, "He orchestrates with his fingers."

Although no one could play more tenderly than he, his was the orchestral way—grand, impetuous, sublime. Among the works he translated for pianists are Beethoven's symphonies. He played them in public, too! To us this seems absurd—Paderewski would never dream of doing such a thing. But it must be remembered that in those days good orchestras were very scarce, and good interpreters of Beethoven's symphonies scarcer. Wagner attests that there were places in these orchestral scores that were not made clear till Liszt translated them into the language of the piano.

What Liszt did for the piano was infinitely more than what Paganini had done for the violin. The greatest pianists—such men as Paderewski, Joseffy, Hofmann, D'Albert, Gabrilowitsch, Busoni, Pachmann, Friedheim, Schelling—are the most ardent admirers of his achievements for the piano, *simply because they know most about them*—just as those conductors who knew or know most about his orchestral works were and are their most enthusiastic champions: Seidl, Richter, Weingartner, Nikisch, Muck, Stransky, and all the others who, during the last half century, have risen above mediocrity.

The greatest violinist of our time, Fritz Kreisler, very seldom plays Paganini, but I know of no great pianist who does not often play Liszt. One could be an up-to-date violinist without knowing anything about Paganini's achievements, but no one could be a first-class pianist without knowing of Liszt's innovations, which influenced even Chopin, and

which have helped all pianists and composers for the piano since that time.

Saint-Saëns declared, without exaggeration, that Liszt's influence on the piano was so great that he knew of nothing comparable to it except the revolution in the mechanism of the French language brought about by Victor Hugo. In his *Portraits et Souvenirs* he gives illuminating glimpses of what this pianistic revolution consisted in.

GERMAN SONGS AND HUNGARIAN RHAPSODIES

Liszt also translated into the language of the piano many of the best songs of Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Chopin and other masters, making them as idiomatic as if they had been composed for his instrument. The recognition of Schubert as the greatest of all song writers dates from the time when Liszt began to play his *Lieder* in public. By the singers they had been neglected till the delight given by Liszt to his audiences showed them their folly.

These were some of the ways in which Liszt "worked for his own glorification rather than in the cause of legitimate music"! But there is much more to come, all of which will read like a sarcastic commentary on Fuller-Maitland's sagacious criticism.

Are folk tunes "legitimate music?" Ask the great masters. Nearly all of them, from Bach and Haydn to Grieg and Tchaikovsky, have been inspired by

these tunes and have woven them into their compositions. None of these masters, however, used them on such a large scale, and with such varied artistry as Liszt did when he gathered the delightful Magyar tunes of Hungary, with their spicy gipsy ornaments, and shaped them into his wonderful rhapsodies. It was a deed comparable to that of Homer in giving coherence to the scattered tales of the Greeks in his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

There are many marvels of appropriate harmonization and coloring in these rhapsodies; when they are played by Paderewski one can hear the very sounds of the gipsy instruments. More than once I have read the statement that Liszt, Paganini-like, wrote these dazzling rhapsodies to show off his brilliant pianism. As a matter of fact he wrote all of them after he had ceased to play in public. He wrote them for the glorification of his native country. In them, and in those of his compositions (including the symphonic poem *Hungaria*), which are tinged with national colors, he gave Hungarian music artistic rank, as Chopin did to Polish, Grieg to Norwegian, Dvorák to Bohemian music. Liszt's rhapsodies are as important art works as Beethoven's sonatas. Personally I enjoy them more. For interesting details regarding them see the introduction by August Spanuth to an edition of Liszt's best Rhapsodies.

How far away we are traveling from Paganini! *He* cared nothing for the art of his country or of any composer, his only object being to arouse as-

tonishment by his feats and accumulate a fortune. While Liszt was the noblest, most generous of mortals, Paganini was ignoble and a miser. The one generous act credited to him has been proven a myth. He earned millions of francs. Liszt might have done the same during the last thirty-nine years of his life, when everybody was imploring him to return to the concert halls; but not one cent did he thus earn. Occasionally, during those years, he did play in public, but always for charity.

Nor did he accept payment from any of the hundreds of pupils from all parts of the world who came to him during those years, at Weimar, Budapest or Rome. And while he refused to play in public for money, he freely played for his pupils, because he knew, as well as Wagner, that "revelation teaches more than study."

CHAPTER X

SAVE BEETHOVEN FROM HIS FRIENDS !

Mark Twain's definition of a "classic" as "an author whom everybody praises and nobody reads" is unfortunately as true as it is funny. Is the time approaching when even the great Beethoven will be a "classic" in that sense? There are disquieting signs that it is. A few years ago a prominent critic, commenting on a festival in a large western city, deplored the fact that the Beethoven program drew the smallest audience of the week. In another city in the East, where a series of Beethoven concerts was given with some prominent soloists, not more than fifty subscription tickets had been sold three days before the concerts began.

Why this strange attitude toward the music of the man who, for more than half a century, has been generally placed above all other composers, as Shakespeare has above all other poets? There are several reasons, concerning which it is time to speak frankly, if we would save Beethoven and restore him to his former popularity.

FOOLISH IDOLATRY

Some years ago, when the great Bohemian composer, Antonin Dvorák, was director of the Na-

tional Conservatory, the editor of the *Century Magazine* asked him to write an article on Schubert. He declined on the ground that he was not a trained writer, whereupon the editor asked me if I would have some talks with Dvorák and put them into magazine shape. I did so, writing down everything Dvorák had said. When he looked over the manuscript a few days later he suddenly stopped, frowned and said: "This must be left out." "What?" I asked; and he replied: "My criticism of Beethoven."

What was this "criticism"? The remark that most symphonies were too long, "even Beethoven's!" Only this and nothing more!

This notion, current throughout the musical world, that nothing must ever be said indicating that Beethoven ever fell short of absolute perfection in any respect, has done, and still is doing, a great deal of harm. Beethoven himself knew very well that of his compositions many fell far short of his high-water mark; some of them he would have been glad to destroy. But his idolators praise them all alike.

Such an attitude breeds hypocrisy; and hypocrisy always does harm. Music lovers who hear the weaker works of Beethoven and then are told that these things are miracles of inspiration, say to themselves: "Well, they are beyond my comprehension—I guess I won't go next time they are played. I have heard them repeatedly and cannot

cannot honor him too highly; but the foolish general idolatry must stop. We must cease treating him as if he, and he alone of all men of genius, were above criticism. And we must submit some of his works to editorial revision. Only thus can we keep his bust on the lofty pedestal where it belongs.

WAGNER AND OTHER EDITORS

No composer ever worshipped another as Wagner worshipped Beethoven. His essay on him—which has been admirably Englished by Dannreuther—is an impassioned dithyramb almost beyond comparison. Speaking of the Ninth Symphony, he once wrote there is no harm in quoting this twice: “Had anybody surprised me before the open score, as I went over it to consider the means of its execution and noted my tears and frantic sobs, he would truly have asked himself if this was conduct becoming a royal Saxon Kapell-meister.”

That was written at the time (1846) when he undertook to conduct this sublime symphony in Dresden for the benefit of the widows' and orphans' pension fund of the Royal Orchestra. When his decision was made known there was general consternation. A deputation was actually sent to Director von Lüttichau asking him not to allow Wagner to carry out his wicked plan. For at that time this symphony was considered dull and incomprehensible. But Wagner persevered and the result

was an unprecedented artistic as well as financial success.

What had he done? He had *edited* and *interpreted* Beethoven. He wrote expression marks into the orchestral parts; he made slight changes in the orchestration so as not to interrupt the melodic curve, which Beethoven had done because some instruments of his time had not the same compass as those of Wagner's day. These and the other changes he introduced in order to make Beethoven's meaning clearer he afterwards described and justified in a long essay of twenty-seven pages—a wonderful contribution to the art of interpretation.

Among those who heard the historic performance of the Ninth in 1846 was a young man named Hans von Bülow, who subsequently won fame by applying Wagner's principles of interpretation to Beethoven's symphonies and other works. After him came Hans Richter, Seidl, Nikisch, Weingartner, Mahler, and others, who followed in Wagner's footsteps and thus won fresh enthusiasm for Beethoven. Weingartner actually wrote a treatise of nearly two hundred pages justifying the editing of Beethoven by conductors.

When Gustav Mahler was conductor of the New York Philharmonic he read the Beethoven works in his own way—a way that simply thrilled his audiences, although many, like myself, had thought they were tired of the Beethoven symphonies, simply because of having heard them so often. In the subjectivity or individuality of his interpretations

Mahler did not go beyond Wagner, or Weingartner, or any of the others just named. Yet he was pounced upon by several of the critics like a criminal. The audiences were wild with enthusiasm—but they were not large, because most of the newspapers abused Mahler and denounced his readings for not being literal. Had they done him justice, proclaiming him as an eloquent apostle of the true Beethoven, the houses would have been crowded. It will be remembered that a famous foreign pianist wrote a highly indignant pamphlet against a certain New York critic, who, while posing as a friend and champion of Beethoven, had denounced Mahler in outrageous terms. From such “friends” may Beethoven be saved.

PADEREWSKI AND TRADITION

Another great Beethoven interpreter, a pianist, used to be abused like Mahler because he preferred the spirit of that master’s music to the letter. Paderewski was often accused of distorting the Beethoven sonatas when, as a matter of fact, he played them in strict accordance with the best traditions.

Hans von Bülow used to warn his pupils against “that tiresome correctness (literalness) which some call the classical style.” It is this dry literalness which gradually reduces the works of a genius to the level of Mark Twain’s definition of “classic” as applied to music—something that everybody praises but nobody wants to hear.

The four things for which Paderewski was most frequently censured were that he used the pedal too much; that he indulged in an unwarranted tempo rubato; that occasionally he lingered too long over a single chord; and in general, that he was too emotional in his readings. As a matter of fact, these were precisely the four most remarkable traits of Beethoven's own playing, as attested by his contemporaries.

These points were briefly referred to in an earlier chapter. But they are of such superlative importance to artists who mix their music with brains that it is worth while dwelling on them with further details.

(1) Czerny, who was a pupil of Beethoven as well as the teacher of Liszt, recorded the fact that Beethoven used the pedal a great deal—far more than is indicated in his printed works.

(2) Another pupil of Beethoven (as well as his biographer), Schindler, knew him in the last thirteen years of his life; and in that period what he heard him play was “always, with few exceptions, free of all restraint in tempo; a tempo rubato in the most exact meaning of the term”; thus improving on his earlier “less expressively varied” style. Schindler takes pains to make it clear that by tempo rubato he means *ritardandos* and *accelerandos* of the pace as a whole; in his own words: “changes in the rate of motion—mostly perceptible only to a delicate ear”—and not the ridiculous left-hand in strict time doctrine.

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(3) Schindler also calls attention (as I pointed out in my *Success in Music*)—to the fact that Beethoven sometimes “delayed very long over a single chord,” as Paderewski does; thus treating music, not as a dancing master treats it, but as a great actor treats a speech—respecting the words and the punctuation marks but reading in a good deal between the lines and thrilling the hearer with an occasional rhetorical pause.

BEETHOVEN’S EMOTIONALISM

(4) The fourth point, Beethoven’s emotional style of playing, is of such supreme importance that a special section must be devoted to it. The Germans, who have produced more great creators of music than great interpreters, are afflicted with a class of pianists who pose as “Beethoven specialists.” Of all unmitigated bores they are the worst. I have heard more than one of them not only play Beethoven, but run down Paderewski’s style of playing Beethoven, utterly ignorant of the fact that he comes a million miles nearer the traditional Beethoven than they do. From the playing of these men all traces of emotion are rigorously banished. Yet Beethoven’s own playing of his works was above all things emotional. To cite a contemporary: “He lost himself in an improvisation the style of which was exceedingly varied and especially distinguished by sudden transitions. . . . He revelled rather in bold, stormy moods than in

soft and gentle ones. The muscles of his face swelled, his veins were distended, his eyes rolled wildly, his mouth trembled convulsively, and he had the appearance of an enchanter mastered by the spirit he had himself conjured."

As an orchestral conductor he was no less emotional and his motions were extravagant, as Seyfried relates. "At a pianissimo he would crouch down till he was hidden behind the desk, and then as the crescendo increased, would gradually rise, beating all the time, until at the fortissimo he would spring into the air with his arms extended as if wishing to float on the clouds." Seyfried recalled a concert given in Vienna in 1808, at which one of the Beethoven concertos was being played. At the beginning of the first tutti, the composer, forgetting that he himself was the soloist, jumped up and began to conduct in his usual style. At the first sforzando he flung out his arms so violently as to extinguish both the lights on the piano desk. Seyfried, fearing that the mishap might recur, then sent for two choir boys and had them hold the candles; but when the fatal sforzando arrived, one of them received such a smart clap in the face from Beethoven's right hand that he dropped his light in terror. The audience, naturally, laughed, and this threw Beethoven into such a rage that when he returned to the piano he broke half a dozen strings at the first chords of the solo.

Readers who may desire more of these interesting details regarding this great master's emotional-

ity may find them in abundance in Ludwig Nohl's *Beethoven Depicted by His Contemporaries* (English by Emily Hill) or in Dr. Theodore Baker's translation of Vincent D'Indy's charming little book on the great master. Beethoven's rivals among the pianists soon began to dread him because of his expressive, passionate playing. "He is a demon," said one of them.

The great master was in love repeatedly, but none of the women he adored would marry him, because he was so ugly, uncouth and eccentric. These, and other disappointments and afflictions he felt deeply, and they are reflected in his compositions. In the words of D'Indy: "The torments of a soul ravaged by feminine charm, the violent passion suffered for women whom he could not wed, the deceitful incapacity of even distinctly hearing the voice of the beloved—all this became music and was translated into masterworks."

It is these masterworks—the sonatas of the middle period—in which Beethoven recorded his ardent feelings aroused by love of women, love of nature, love of his own country—he lived nearly all his life in the midst of the excitement of war—it is these masterworks that the "Beethoven specialists" and others play with the "tiresome correctness" known as the "classical style!" From such "friends" could he hear them, Beethoven would be the first to wish himself saved.

CHAPTER XI

ICONOCLAST, DEMOCRAT, BRAIN- PROPRIETOR*

While Beethoven had his foibles and eccentricities, his attitude toward music and musicians and those who imagined themselves his superiors because of wealth or the accident of "noble" birth served as a good example to all.

Particularly praiseworthy was his pride in being a musician and a thinker. One day when his brother Johann sent up his card with the word "land-proprietor" after his name, the composer sent down his own card, on which he had written "brain-proprietor."

On another occasion he made up his mind to sell

**When this chapter appeared in THE ETUDE, the editor prefixed the following note: "Just when the spark of Democracy commenced to flicker in Germany no one knows. Our own republic was well established when Beethoven reached his prime, and it is possible that some of his independence was inspired by the progress of the Democracy in the new world. Unquestionably, Beethoven and Wagner both made a bold stand against the old world aristocracy. Beethoven never relented—Wagner, however, after his years of exile and jeopardy, aligned himself with the aristocracy when he found that his own art purposes could not be accomplished without their patronage."*

the ring he had received from the King of Prussia for the dedication of the ninth symphony. Karl Holz tried to prevent this, begging him to remember that it came from a king; but "I, too, am a king," was Beethoven's prompt answer.

He was far ahead of his time in being fully convinced, as we all are *now*, that being of the aristocracy of genius is a prouder distinction than belonging to the aristocracy of birth, which the great war has dealt such a deadly blow.

Whenever I use the German "Who's Who?" I am struck by its characteristic difference from the "Who's Who?" published here and in England. It is a huge volume, rather stupidly called "Wer Ist's," and is filled almost entirely with the names of absolute nobodies, who happen (or happened, we may say now) to belong to the so-called "nobility" of the empire; whereas, the names in the American and English "Who's Whos?" are those of persons who have *distinguished themselves* in one way or another.

"FOR SUCH PIGS I REFUSE TO PLAY"

In Beethoven's day, in Austria, as well as in Germany, the aristocracy of birth held complete sway. "Mankind begins with the baron" was the insolent and asinine maxim that prevailed. What Beethoven thought of it we have already seen by implication. He treated the Viennese aristocrats

of the highest rank as his equals in every possible way, and refused to kow-tow to them.

He did not like to give music lessons, because they interfered with his creative work; but he did give some, and even if the pupils happened to belong to members of the imperial family that did not induce him to treat them with more deference than others. He refused to submit to the artificialities of court etiquette even when giving lessons in the house of Prince Rudolph, the youngest son of Emperor Leopold II; and when the courtiers molested him with their attempts to make him follow the prescribed rules of conduct he appealed personally to the Prince, who, far from being displeased, smiled and told the masters of ceremony to let Beethoven have his own way.

Ferdinand Ries relates how, on one occasion, Beethoven rebuked some ill-bred aristocrats. It was at a musical gathering in the home of Count Browne. Beethoven was playing some of his four-hand marches with Ries, when the Count P. began to talk loudly with a young lady in the door to the adjoining room. After several attempts to restore silence had been made in vain, Beethoven suddenly got up and exclaimed: "For such pigs I refuse to play."

All attempts to make him go back to the piano failed.

Would that all musicians who are similarly insulted had Beethoven's courage. Some, to be sure,

could not afford to follow his example. Nor need anyone use his unparliamentary language.

Liszt's way was more polite, but quite as effective. He was playing for the court in the Russian capital when the Czar began to talk loudly. Liszt stopped abruptly, and when asked why he did not proceed he answered: "Etiquette demands that when the Emperor speaks others must be silent."

MORE THAN A KING

Reading George Henschel's "Musings and Memories" the other day, I was struck by the evidence presented in it of Brahm's modesty, or, rather, humility. Speaking of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven he said: "What I cannot understand is how people like myself can be vain. As much as we men, who walk upright, are above the creeping things of the earth, so these gods are above us. If it were not so ludicrous it would be loathsome to me to hear colleagues of mine praise me to my face in such an exaggerated manner."

He knew his place in the history of music better than did his adulators. Posterity, he once said, would place him on a level with Cherubini. That, no doubt, was over-modest. Cherubini is now practically forgotten, whereas, of Brahms's things some will live.

Such humility was foreign to Beethoven, nor would it have been in place, for he knew he was

a king—more than that, in fact; for how many kings are remembered after death?

At the same time, he knew perfectly well he was not infallible. He was not like the foolish Beethovenites of our day, who would have us think everything he wrote was perfect. When Katharina Tibbini complimented him on being the only master who had never composed anything that was insignificant or weak, he exclaimed: "The devil you say! Many of the things I have written I would be glad to destroy if I could."

In his letters he repeatedly confessed that he had to write "potboilers" to earn the money he needed to gain time enough for his masterworks. One of these potboilers, by his own confession, was the pianoforte sonata op. 106; it was written, as he said to Ries, "almost for the sake of the bread—I have got as far as that."

Contemporary critics did not hesitate to point out flaws in his works, real or imaginary. Particularly the "Leipzig oxen," as he called them, had a habit of speaking disrespectfully of him. "But let them talk," he wrote to one of his publishers. "They will certainly not make anyone immortal by their chatter, no more than they can take away immortality from anyone for whom Apollo has decreed it."

Critical attacks on the style and structure of his works only excited his hilarity. Thus Seyfried relates: "When he came across criticisms accusing him of making blunders in musical grammar he laughed loudly and, rubbing his hands gleefully, ex-

claimed: "Yes, yes! They put their heads together and open wide their mouths because they have not seen anything like it in the text books on harmony."

Concerning the professional painists of his day he wrote: "Many of them are my deadly enemies."

Why his enemies? Because mediocrity hates genius. Paderewski has had many deadly enemies. Apart from that, one can see no particular reason why pianists should have been hostile to Beethoven. He did not play often in public, and when he did he played only his own compositions. These, surely, the others could not have been expected to play as well as he did.

Their inferiority was, to be sure, revealed painfully when it came to improvisations. In this he was, in the words of Tomaschek, "a giant among pianists."

WHEN IMPROVISING WAS THE FASHION

In Beethoven's day all the pianists were expected to improvise in public on themes chosen not by, but for them. There is record, for instance, of an occasion when Beethoven and one of his rivals, Woelffl, sat side by side at two pianos and in turn improvised on themes proposed by one to the other. It was agreed that it was on such occasions that Beethoven was at his best. Mozart's historic remark: "Keep your eyes on him! He will some day make the world talk about him," was made after he had heard him improvise.

"He appears to most advantage in improvisation," wrote a contemporary critic, "and it is, indeed, marvelous to see how easily and logically he will extemporize on any given theme, not merely by varying the figures (as many virtuosi do with much success and—bluster), but by a real development of the idea."

Probably one reason why improvising went out of fashion was that it so easily lent itself to exploitation by humbugs. There is a story of a boy prodigy, who, in the midst of his "improvisation," cried out in tones of anguish, "Papa, I have forgotten the rest."

There are not many pianists today to whose impromptu playing one would care to listen. I have heard one, however, who is practically blind, and is very clever in this way. He will take any theme, or a group of four notes given him, and develop it in the manner of a Bach fugue, a Chopin nocturne, a Mozart sonata, a Strauss waltz and so on. His name is Fred Melius.

In *The Etude* some years ago, Adele Hippins told of a memorable occasion when she and another pupil of Rubinstein were permitted to hear him improvise: "He grew excited, heated, hair fell over his forehead; he and the piano seemed to make but one. Then appeared an exquisite melody, accompanied by chords in the bass and strengthened by the surging of powerful arpeggios over the entire instrument. He increased the difficulties, he stormed like full orchestra, the piano almost gave way under

his hands. The impression was overwhelming, my nerves were so wrought up that I felt stifled. I glanced at my neighbor—she had left the room weeping. We all had a feeling of involuntary terror, as if in the presence of some elementary power of nature. Yes, Rubinstein was, in truth, awe-inspiring.”

An amusing anecdote is related regarding the last occasion when Beethoven played for friends. The eminent publisher Schlesinger visited Vienna and gave a great dinner. Beethoven was one of the guests and was, of course, invited to improvise. After repeatedly refusing, he finally consented on condition that Castelli, who hadn't the remotest idea of how to play the piano, should give him a theme. Castelli walked up to the instrument, touched with his first finger four keys down the scale and the same up again. “That's enough,” exclaimed Beethoven, laughing. Then he sat down and, to the delight of the guests improvised a whole hour on those four notes, which were interwoven into everything he played.

This was in 1825, two years before his death. He had stopped playing in public in 1814. His whole career as a virtuoso covered only nineteen years. Truth to tell he was never particularly interested in the life of a virtuoso. According to Ries and Julia Guicciardi, he did not enjoy playing his own things in public—probably because he did not care to take the time for acquiring an impeccable technic. Czerny, indeed, expressly states that the

reason why Beethoven preferred improvising to playing his printed works was that he could thus avoid passages that he had not had time to practice.

BEETHOVEN COULD NOT DANCE

Reference has been made to the fact that Beethoven, in playing his own works, made free use of the fluctuating pace which is stupidly called tempo rubato.

Possibly this addiction to undulating tempo accounts for the extraordinary fact that Beethoven, as attested by Ries, could never learn how to dance in time. However, the Viennese, among whom he lived, do dance in a fluctuating, capricious fashion, especially in the Strauss waltzes, as I know from personal observation.

Ries refers to Beethoven's failure as a dancer as simply one detail of his general awkwardness and lack of grace "in everything he did." He seldom took anything in hand without letting it fall or breaking it. Repeatedly he dropped his inkstand into his piano. No piece of furniture was safe in his presence. "How he ever learned to shave himself is hard to understand, even if we take no account of the frequent cuts on his cheeks."

Strange that there are so few traces of this awkwardness in his music! From this point of view it does not mirror the man. It does, however, mirror the passionate outbursts of "temperament" from which all of his friends suffered, followed by the soothing, conciliatory notes peculiar to him,

It is said of Brahms that once, at a reception, he said before leaving: "If there is anyone here whom I have *not* offended I beg his pardon." Beethoven often offended his best friends, but when the ebullition was over he wrote them abject letters of apology.

Like Brahms, Handel and Chopin, Beethoven never married, but he greatly admired beautiful women, and was always falling in love. His infatuation, however, never lasted long—seven months, in one case, being the limit, according to Ries. Yet there is nothing superficial or ephemeral about his love music, except in his songs, in which he was rarely at his best.

Of his love of nature, the *Pastoral Symphony* is the eloquent witness, teaching the lesson that, with the exception of love for woman, there is no source of musical inspiration equal to it. Neate related that he had "never met a man who so rejoiced in nature, who so hugely enjoyed flowers and clouds, as Beethoven did. Nature was his food as it were; it was the element he lived in. When taking his walks in a meadow near Vienna he would sit down on some inviting green for a bench, and give himself up to his musings. In his note book he once wrote: "It is as if every tree spoke to me, Holy, holy! In the forest there is enchantment—who could express all this?"

Birds he loved particularly, introducing the song of several in his *Pastoral Symphony*.

CHAPTER XII

BIRDS AS SINGERS AND MUSIC TEACHERS

Two of the greatest singers the world has ever heard, Jenny Lind and Christine Nilsson, were each proud of being referred to as "the Swedish nightingale." Was that really a compliment? Does the nightingale or any other bird sing so beautifully that a world-famed prima donna should swell with pride when she is compared to one?

So wonderful is the nightingale's song, in the words of the Englishman, Charles A. Witchell (who wrote a valuable book on the evolution of bird-song), that "a listener is apt to forget all else than the supreme impulse and passion of the singer. . . . Now he prolongs his repetitions till the woods ring. Now his note seems as soft as a kiss; now it is a loud shout, perchance a threat (*rrrrrr*); now a soft *p e e u u*, *p e e u u*, swelled in an amazing crescendo. Now he imitates the *sip sip sip sisisis* of the wood-warbler, now the bubbling notes of the nuthatch. The scientific investigator is abashed by this tempestuous song, this wild melody, the triumph-song of Nature herself, piercing beyond the ear, right to the heart of the listener. He is pleading now! But no, he is declamatory; now weird,

now fierce; triumphant; half-merry; one seems to hear him chuckle, mock, and defy in almost the same breath."

THE QUEEN OF SONG BIRDS

Is it a wonder that Milton, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Cowper, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Heine, Longfellow and other great poets referred in glowing verses to the beauty of the nightingale's song? Is it strange that bird lovers should have exhausted their ingenuity in trying to convey some idea of this charm to those who have never heard the queen of songbirds? Athanasius Kircher made an audacious attempt to record it in our musical notation; his page is reprinted in *Wild Birds and Their Music*, by F. Schuyler Mathews, an admirable book by a thorough musician. Others have attempted to give a vague idea of it by the use of letters. For example:

Tió, tió, tió, tió, tió, tió, tió, tix.

Tzu, tzu, tzu, tzu, tzu, tzu, tzu, tzu, tzu.

Tzoree, tzoree, tzoree, tzoree, hi; etc.

With which compare the attempt of a famous German bird specialist, J. F. Naumann:

Ih ih ih ih wati wati wati!

Dewati quoi quoi quoi qui,

Ita lulululu lulu lulululu watiwatiwati!

Ihiih tatagirrarrrrrrrrrrrr itz,
 Lu lu lu lu lu lu lu watititit.
 Twei woi woi woi woi woi woi ih, etc.

This comes about as near to giving one an idea of the bird diva's song as one could give of a gorgeous sunset with chalk and a blackboard. But there is a Victor record (No. 64,161) which always proves a pleasant surprise to those who have never heard a nightingale in the woods. Unfortunately it was made by a captive bird, and birds in a cage are not apt to sing with the wild, triumphant abandon of birds in the bush. But I have heard nightingales abroad whose song fully bore out every word written by Mr. Witchell, and I can understand his indignation at Bechstein's assertion that this bird has "only twenty-four strains."

GRAND CLIMAX OF ALL BIRD MUSIC

John Burroughs thinks the nightingale is but little short of perfect in all qualities. "We have," he says, "no one bird that combines such strength or vivacity with such melody. The mockingbird, doubtless, surpasses it in variety and profusion of notes; but falls short, I imagine, in sweetness and effectiveness. The nightingale will sometimes warble twenty seconds without pausing to breathe and when the condition of the air is favorable its song fills a space a mile in diameter. There are, perhaps, songs in our woods as mellow and bril-

liant, as is that of the closely allied species, the water-thrush; but our bird's song has but a mere fraction of the nightingale's volume and power."

Has America any songster to match the nightingales of England, France, Russia, Germany and Italy? Was it patriotism that made Mathews declare that the song of our hermit thrush is "the grand climax of all bird music"? Would the great European poets have gone into such supreme raptures over the nightingale had they known our thrushes? H. D. Minot, while conceding that the nightingale is "the greatest of all bird vocalists," declares that it has "a less individual and exquisite genius than our wood thrush." Mathews cites a theme of the hermit thrush which, he declares, "is completely beyond the ability of the nightingale; it is a theme worthy of elaboration at the hands of a master musician; but the hermit does his own elaborating. . . . Some of the themes are in the minor key and some in the major; some are plaintive, others are joyous, all are melodious; there is no score of the nightingale which can compare with such records as these. . . . [It must be remembered, however, that bird songs are most ethereal things, a great deal like the wonderful tinting and delicate spiral weaving of Venetian glass; one must see the color or hear the melody in order to fully appreciate its subtle beauty; the song is charming because of its spirituality of tone and its depth of expression; how can the meager outlines of music notation convey such truths? Who

can justly report the hermit's song? There is a silvery sustained tone like that of a flute, then a burst of brilliant scintillating music:

. . . . and the song's complete,
 With such a wealth of melody sweet
 As never the organ pipe could blow
 And never musician think or know!"

The dynamics of this thrush range from pianissimo to fortissimo. The fortissimo has been heard across a lake at a distance of nearly a mile, while the whispered tones cannot be heard farther than thirty feet away. Cheney compared the climax of this bird's song to the bursting of a musical rocket that fills the air with silver tones. "Yes," adds Mathews, "the tones *are* silver—burnished silver, and sweeter far than those of any instrument created by the hand of man."

OPERATIC MELODIES FROM THE TREES

If Richard Wagner had carried out his plan of migrating to the United States he might have been accused of borrowing some of his Nibelung melodies from songs of hermit thrushes heard and recorded (pp. 242-3) by Mr. Mathews; not merely calls, like those of the cuckoo, nightingale and quail as introduced by Beethoven into his *Pastoral Symphony*, but real melodies like that of the bird which guides

Siegfried to Brünnhilde and the Rhine daughters' motive.

The same observer, who has spent years in the woods with opera glass and note-book in hand, heard meadowlarks sing snatches of melodies identical with phrases in *La Traviata*, *Aida*, *Carmen* and *Ruddygore*. From a purely technical point of view this bird is less praiseworthy than as a creator of melodies, his voice being wiry and thin, wherefore he is not classed among our best songsters.

Like an operatic coloratura singer is the bobolink, concerning which we read that he "is indeed a great singer, but the latter part of his song is a species of musical fireworks. He begins bravely enough with a number of well-sustained tones, but presently he accelerates his time, loses track of his motive, and goes to pieces in a burst of musical scintillations. It is a mad, reckless song fantasia, an outbreak of pent-up irrepressible glee." To make a record of this music sung at breakneck speed is impossible until we get a recorder "with the sound-catching skill of Blind Tom and the phonograph combined."

In the South the bobolink, every year, destroys two or three million dollars' worth of rice; then he goes north and tries to atone for the theft with his song. He succeeds, I think. To be sure, I don't own a rice field! I love to watch him as he hops along our fence in Maine, apparently trying to lure me away from his wife's nest, and then,

when the danger is past, rising like a skylark, soaring and singing.

Jean de Reszke, the greatest operatic tenor and artist of his time, frequently lunched at my residence during the years he was in New York. Of course, I never asked him to sing, but at table he often kept us convulsed with laughter imitating the voices and mannerisms of other artists at the Metropolitan Opera House. Adelina Patti had the same gift; Herman Klein remarks, in his recently published book, *The Reign of Patti*: "From childhood upward, her sense of humor, her spirit of mischief, her love of drollery and of fun, had been allowed unrestricted sway. To those qualities she added her extraordinary gift of mimicry—not mere talent for imitation, but an intuitive faculty for faithfully reproducing the manner or style of whatever she saw or heard done by another person."

A FEATHERED CLOWN

"How birdlike!" an ornithologist would exclaim on hearing these things. The mockingbird owes its very name to its habit—and amazing success—in imitating almost any sound it hears, musical or otherwise. I remember how indignant my sister in Southern California used to be one winter when I was with her because mockingbirds so often made her run out into the chicken yard, thinking a hawk was after her alarmed flock.

"There is a dash of the clown and the buffoon

in the mockingbird's nature," says John Burroughs, "which too often flavors its whole performance. It is when its love passion is upon it that the serious and even grand side of its character comes out," he adds.

Many other birds possess the mocking bird's faculty of mimicry. The catbird, for instance, "intersperses his melodic phrases with quotations from the highest authorities—thrush, song-sparrow, wren, oriole and whippoorwill. The yowl of the cat is thrown in anywhere, the guttural remarks of the frog are repeated without the slightest reference to good taste or appropriateness, and the harsh squawk of the old hen, or the chirp of the lost chicken, is always added in some *mal à propos* manner. All is grist which comes to the catbird's mill, and all is ground out according to the bird's own way of thinking," writes Mr. Mathews. In other words, there is no regularity; these birds *improvise* as much as does a pianist when he just follows the inspiration of the moment.

Bird song, evidently, isn't such a simple, "instinctive" thing as most persons imagine. It can be as fluently melodious and euphonious as Bellini, but it also rivals modern program music, and even ultra-modern cacophony; Schönberg, Ornstein and the rest of them have not succeeded in reproducing the awful roar of the lion, but the ostrich does it so successfully that even the keen-eared Hottentots cannot always discriminate between them. "Can we wonder," asks Mr. Witchell, "that the young of

the imitative butcher-bird, when out of the nest, should squeal like a tortured frog or bird when we know that the parents lay frogs and birds in the vicinity of the young?"

The bleating of lambs, the mewing of cats, the note of a kite or buzzard, the hooting of an owl, and even the neighing of a horse, are imitated by English jays so closely that Montagu was deceived. A more musical kind of "program music" results from the habit of many birds of imitating each other and the sounds of nature. Witchell heard thrushes mimic the cries and songs of the nuthatch, wood-warbler, house-sparrow, blackbird, nightingale, starling, lark, chaffinch, goldfinch and a number of other birds. Robins imitate larks, blackcaps, greenfinches, besides the titmouse and hedge-accentor. The skylark has at least sixteen other birds in his repertory; the starling has eighteen or more; nor is even the nightingale content with his own lovely song, but must needs introduce in it motives borrowed from other feathered songsters.

Inanimate nature also influences bird music. The voices of owls simulate the moaning of the wind in hollow trees, such as these birds frequent. In British Columbia Mr. Witchell heard what he thought was the sound of a gurgling, rippling mountain stream. It stopped, and started again, and then he noticed that it was the song of a Canadian wren. He thinks that many of the warbling birds, such as the blackcap, robin, blackbird, thrush and willow-warbler, which build their nests near run-

ning water, are likely, when young, to be influenced by the rippling sounds they hear. What a theme for musical poets!

EVERY PAPA BIRD TEACHES MUSIC

A thousand years ago it was expected that every Englishman at a banquet would be able, if called upon, to sing a song and accompany himself on the harp. It makes one laugh to think of what would happen if such a request were made at a modern banquet, anywhere. And how helpless ninety-nine out of every hundred human fathers would be if they were asked to teach their children music! But that is what every papa-bird does! Music teaching is a universal profession among birds! With a few and occasional exceptions, mamma-birds do not sing; perhaps for the same reason that they do not wear the gay plumage of the males, which would betray them, while hatching the young, to the keen eyes of birds of prey. But the male is an irrepressible songster, danger or no danger, and every one of his little boys is expected to learn to sing, as much as a matter of course, as our boys are expected to learn the three R's—"Reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic." I am speaking, of course, of song birds only. Not all birds have a vocal apparatus, but the world over there are some six thousand species which do sing.

I know an American woman who was born in Mexico and when she came to New York at the age

of five she spoke only Spanish. I know another American woman who was brought up at Lyons and when she came back to New York at the age of six she spoke only French. It is the same way with birds. If a nightingale were hatched and reared among robins or thrushes it would sing like a robin or a thrush. Certain calls and cries of alarm seem to be inherited and instructive, but the actual song of birds is acquired. The older birds are the teachers, and the younger birds learn by listening to them and trying to repeat what they heard, improving from year to year, and gradually adding details and expressive touches of their own. Some of the youngsters are more gifted than others, and the vocal sins of fathers are visited on their children.

What's the reason that in some regions finches and nightingales and other birds sing better than in other places? Cats! A single cat will catch and eat a hundred or more birds each year. In regions where cats and hawks are scarce birds are likely to live many years, and as their proficiency in singing improves from summer to summer, the younger ones have better teachers as models and thus learn to be better singers than those heard in cat-infested regions.

Buffon believed that mockingbirds sometimes consciously sing for the purpose of gaining the favor of man. One thing is certain, he says: "Its song, sung close to human habitations—in the vines and orchards and gardens of man's planting—is not

the same song it sings in the wild depths of the southern woods." Roaming in Mexican woods he could always tell when he was approaching a settler's cabin by the peculiar notes of this bird.

Man and birds are the only animals that sing—we know why we sing. Professionals sing for money and applause, and that's why most of them sing so badly and so artificially. Amateurs sing to while away time, for the enjoyment of the music, to please friends, to express happy or sad feelings, especially religion and love. Bird song is commonly supposed to be all love music. Undoubtedly it is at its best in the springtime of courtship, when the male bird is eager to lure the female, and in all probability the best bird music is inspired by ardent love and fierce rivalry when two or more birds compete for the favor of a female. On such occasions male birds have been known to sing so ardently, so rapturously, that they fall down exhausted, and even dead.

SINGING FOR THE LOVE OF IT

But many birds sing in summer when the season of courtship is over, or in fall, and even in winter. Why? Evidently because they enjoy singing for its own sake, just as we do. Mathews goes so far as to say (and few know birds so intimately) that they sing *first* for the love of music and second "for the love of the lady." The skylark sometimes continues to sing even when fighting. Caged birds sing

because they have nothing else to do. Wild birds announce daybreak by song because the dangers of the dark are past. They sing when the fog lifts, or after a shower, because they are glad that the sun has returned. Like ourselves they sing at a feast. "The songbird," writes Maurice Thompson, in his charming little book, *Sylvan Secrets*, "is a gourmand of the most pronounced type, and we find him going into a rapture of sweet sounds over a feast of insects or fruit. . . . I have seen a mocking-bird eat the best part of a luscious pear or apricot, and then leap to the topmost stray of the tree and sing as if it would trill itself into fragments for very joy of the feast."

CHAPTER XIII

HOW TO BEGIN WITH CHILDREN

The prevalent practice is thus described by a well-known musician: "I was taken to the piano by a well-meaning old lady, who taught the fingering of the scales and then set me to work to play them industriously for the next six months. I heard no music of any kind except the rumble of the technical cogs as I went over them. She did not even teach me notation; simply scales—miles of black and white signposts which were supposed to mark the progress of my youthful musical career. If I had only had some music to cheer me along the way it would not have been so terrible, but I had none."

TOO MANY THINGS AT ONCE

A well-known German teacher, Professor Rudolph Palme, has written a pamphlet which suggests what should be done with pupils during the first month. In announcing this brochure the publishers say: "Nowhere are greater mistakes made than in the first piano lessons. Usually, at the very beginning, a method is placed on the piano, and after a few notes have been taught and keys pointed out, the pupil has to play according to the

notes. Three difficulties confront the child at once: he is expected to play after notes of which he as yet knows little; to touch keys the position of which is unfamiliar, and—worst of all—he is asked to play with a correct position of the hand and correct touch—two things which can only be acquired gradually with the aid of good instruction. No wonder that there are so many poor players and that many pupils become more and more displeased and finally give up altogether. Many teachers are at a loss how to begin, as none of the piano methods gives special directions.”

Professor Palme’s book, which is full of useful hints, endeavors to supply this want, telling just what to do during the first month. It begins, however, at the piano, and, therefore, does not directly concern our thesis, which is, “what should we teach the child before he is permitted to play?”

A NEW FIELD FOR TEACHERS

There is a great deal of preliminary work to be done; so much, indeed, that when once this matter is fully understood, an entirely new field of activity will be opened up to teachers, both of playing and singing.

Why is it that most singers are not such good all-round musicians as the average players? It is because regular training of a boy’s or girl’s voice cannot safely begin before the age of puberty; in the meantime the young folks, unless they happen

to be choir boys, learn little, except what they pick up at random or in the scant school exercises, the result being a loss of time which can never be made up.

Lessons on instruments may begin sooner, yet even for these the age of six is considered the earliest, and in most cases it is better to wait until the child is seven to eight years old before he is allowed to "claw the ivory" (as John Fiske used to say), or has a violin put in its hands.

SIGNIFICANCE OF EARLY CONTROL

In other words, the music teacher usually has no control whatever of his future pupils during the first seven or eight years of their life. What a huge blunder this is, is vividly illustrated by the old Jesuit maxim: "Give me a child during its first seven years and I care not who has it afterwards."

During these early years a child's mind is like a photographer's plates, ready to receive any impressions for good or evil; and if properly fixed, these impressions are indelible.

During these same years a child learns to speak English—often French and German, too, or some other language spoken by its parents or governess: and all this without effort or taking lessons in grammar.

Why should the child not have a musical "governess," too," and thus learn the tone language as

easily and unconsciously as it learns the word language?

Some children do thus learn it: they are so fortunate as to belong to families in which a musical atmosphere is created by daily singing and playing. The music which children hear in church also has its influence; doubtless one of the main reasons why the Germans are generally musical is that from childhood they hear the melodious and richly harmonized chorals sung by the congregations.

VALUE OF SINGING MACHINES

To make a child really musical before it begins its regular lessons, more, however, is needed. The boys and girls should hear music, and plenty of it, correctly performed every day, from the very beginning of their life. Families that are able to create their own musical atmosphere are in a minority in this country. Fortunately, a simple remedy is now at hand—the sound-reproducing machines.

America is the birthplace of these machines, which do for the ears what photography does for the eyes; and it is not too much to say that, more than any agency, they will help to make us a musical nation, because they bring good music into every home and make it possible to repeat it over and over again, which is the condition of learning to appreciate the best and reject the vulgar.

“But where does the music teacher come in?” the reader may ask. He comes in on the ground floor.

His guidance is needed in the selection of good music. As a matter of course many of the "records" prepared for the sound-reproducing machines are devoted to the reproduction of popular music.

Teachers cannot remedy this evil at once. There always has been, and probably will be for a long time to come, more demand for trivial and vulgar music than for the best. But the teacher can do much to improve matters. He can go to the parents of young children and read them this chapter; or, if he has it not with him, he can say to them: "You would not, I am sure, deliberately send your little boys and girls to a public or private school where they use cheaply compiled text-books with vulgar pictures, in preference to text-books made by leading educators with refined and elevating pictures?"

"Why then run the risk of having their taste spoiled by hearing vulgar music, instead of what is acknowledged to be the best? Let me make phonographic selections for you now, and I will guarantee that when, subsequently, you send your children to me or some other teacher for regular lessons, their progress will be twice as rapid; and instead of dreading their lessons as drudgery, as most children now do, they will look forward to them with eager anticipation."

Most parents will see the point, and the teacher, having thus gained entrance to the family, can, in scores of other ways, make himself useful in preparing young children of from two to six years of

age for the later "keyboard stage" of musical training. What are these other ways?

MAKING CHILDREN TRULY MUSICAL

The best teacher for pupils of any grade is the one who can make the work so entertaining that it is not looked on as work at all, but as play. This is particularly important in the earliest stages.

Children are always amused when they have an opportunity in a menagerie to see how the monkeys imitate various gestures made by the spectators; they are too young to realize that they are just as great imitators as these monkeys.

Laura L. Plaisted relates in her book, "The Early Education of Children" (Oxford: Clarendon Press)—which every teacher who intends to enter this new field ought to read—that she knew a baby of a year old, who hummed an imitation of two street-calls in perfect tune, "and the impulse to imitate the call of the milkman, the paper-man, or other street-vendors, seems to be irresistible to the average small child. Thus any familiar sound, such as the bugle call, the horn of the huntsman or of the coach, the chimes of the clock or of the bells, the street-cries, or the voices of animals, may be the point of departure for the first lessons in the rudiments of music."

The earliest lessons must be very short. Mendelssohn's mother began with five-minute lessons when Felix and his sister were very young; and

Miss Plaisted says, on this point: "The child cannot concentrate on any one subject for a lengthy period; hence, no lessons for children under seven years of age are, as a rule, more than twenty minutes in duration, and for the young child of four or five years it is seldom advisable to let even a story or a talk continue more than ten or fifteen minutes."

Very young children are, moreover, long-sighted; their eyes are not adapted for seeing things at close range, and they should, therefore, not be asked to use books before the age of six years. Nor should young children be allowed to sing much. There are only about six musical tones in the voice of a child of four, and it is risky to strain it beyond that compass.

A further reason for not beginning systematic music lessons at too early an age is given in a book, entitled "Musical Kindergarten Method for the Nursery and the Classroom," by Daniel Batchellor and Charles W. Landon—a book which also contains many other useful hints: "The finer muscles of the fingers are comparatively late in maturing, and we must not expect much control of them in the average child before seven or eight years of age."

But if the eyes, the vocal cords and the fingers must thus be spared in infancy, the ears are ready for service from the earliest age, and this points the way to the correct method of pre-keyboard training.

Because of the child's disposition to imitate the

sounds it hears, the best way to begin the education of its ears is to produce for it, with the voice or with the toy instruments, the sounds made by various animals it knows, and let it try to imitate them, which it will do gleefully. The next step is to make sounds by tapping on objects made of various materials—iron, wood, tin porcelain, glass, etc., and after a few repetitions, let the tiny pupil guess which is which. If there are different instruments in the house, such as piano, organ, guitar, violin, flute, the child can be blindfolded or taken to another room to guess which of them is being played.

There is nothing children like better than guessing games, and in this way they have a good time, while having their attention trained to distinguish, and consciously attend to, differences in tone quality. The teacher can bring along needed instruments and thus the child may learn all about the ingredients of orchestral tone colors before it is old enough to take a music lesson, in the present sense of the term. Surely a great advantage later on.

In the same playful way rhythm, melody and harmony can be taught.

Definitions are valueless in elementary instruction. You can bully small boys and girls into learning by heart that rhythm is what remains of music if you take away melody and harmony; but the youngest child can be taught its meaning in a minute. Play for it on the piano—or sing, or let the sound-reproducing machine do it—several simple tunes repeatedly till the child knows them by

heart. Then eliminate the melody and harmony by tapping the tunes on the table and let him guess which tune it is. "That is what is called the rhythm of the song," is all that need then be said; and this simple demonstration is worth more than a hundred definitions.

Toy drums can be used for the tapping. Negro tribes living along the river tell those dwelling on the other side all sorts of things by beating the rhythms of different tunes on their drums. A teacher with an imagination can easily devise diverse drum games which will amuse the young ones and develop their rhythmic sense.

That's the way to mix brains with elementary music lessons—to ensure rapid progress later on.

THE VALUE OF TOYS

For getting an infant interested in melody, various toys are of use. Unfortunately, penny whistles, toy trumpets and the like are a nuisance to adults: but there is one toy which has tones so soft that they can hardly annoy anyone—xylophones and metallophones. For educational purposes I regard these as the most useful of all instruments, because they can be played at so early an age.

Place on the table one of these before the child and show him how to make it sound by hitting it gently with the little stick. He will soon be playing the scale up and down, and this will develop his

sense of pitch. Tell him he is playing what is called a scale, and then with a colored pencil, write the letters, C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, on the wooden, metallic or glass strips. The child will soon be able to place the tones correctly, and if asked to strike C, E, G, or C, F, A, C, he will get an elementary lesson in self-made harmony.

Then dictate simple melodies to him—there are plenty that come within the compass of the diatonic scale—letting him first strike the notes as if they were all alike; then show him how much the tune is improved by being played with the correct rhythm. Weeks and months can be devoted to this kind of play—play in both senses of the word; and when the possibilities of these simple instruments are exhausted the teacher can order one of those harmonicas which have a keyboard, the strips being either steel or glass.

This will familiarize the pupil with the details of a keyboard years before it is advisable to let him practice on a real piano.

There are many varieties of those toys. The word harmonica is also used for the drinking glasses, or finger bowls, tuned ad libitum by putting in more or less water and rubbing the moistened fingers across the edge. Under the teacher's guidance, the continuous tones thus sounded can be used for producing all sorts of chords, thus educating the harmonic sense of the several children helping to make them.

The possibilities afforded by this kind of music

may be inferred from the fact that the great composer, Gluck—the Wagner of the Eighteenth Century—played in London, in 1746, what was described as “a concerto on twenty-six drinking glasses tuned with spring water, accompanied with the whole band, being a new instrument of his own invention, upon which he performs whatever may be done on a violin or harpsichord.”

The celesta is a sort of piano in which the sounds are produced by hammers striking narrow plates of steel. It has a compass of four octaves and has been used effectively by Tchaikovsky, Mahler, Strauss and other modern masters. A simplified form of it might easily be made for young children to play on with one or two fingers, so as to make them familiar with the keyboard and the various scales.

In connection with this, a few minutes of each lesson should be devoted to teaching notation. The Germans call the scale a tone-ladder—an expression delightfully useful for elementary instruction. Draw a ladder with rungs and half rungs, write on them the names of the notes of the scale and show their correspondence with the keys of the toy piano. Next, show how these rungs are represented by the lines and spaces of the staff—and there you are! Your pupil, when he is finally advanced to the piano keyboard, will no longer be discouraged, as he is by present methods, by being asked to learn and do half a dozen new things at once. He will know the names and sounds of the keys and be able to

read at sight, so that he can give his attention chiefly to the problems of hand position and fingering.

TOUCH, PEDAL AND EXPRESSION

I was going to add "and touch" to the last sentence, but touch also can be profitably taught before the actual keyboard practice begins. Rubinstein, as a child, used to touch a key over and over again till he got the beautiful tone he wanted. Show the child the vast difference between a rude and a soft touch—like the difference between a blow on the back and a soft pat on the cheek. He can learn all about dynamics—from the softest to the loudest—long before he is old enough for five-finger exercises.

Most teachers act as if expression were a thing which does not concern young pupils at all, but must be left for the "finishing touches." It is, on the contrary, a thing which should be taught even in the pre-keyboard stage of education. This can be done with the aid of the sound-reproducing machine, which repeat songs sung by Caruso, Nordica, or other great artists, not only with all the changes in loudness and softness or in pace, but the correct phrasing and individual tone colors; or the teacher herself can do it at the piano, calling the child's attention to the great difference it makes whether this or that song is played softly or loudly, slowly or fast. Gross exaggeration may at first be needed to convince the child, but it will soon learn.

Bülow used this method—caricaturing—with adult pupils, with excellent results.

Another element of musical expression—tone coloring—can be taught in these preliminary years. It is obtained on the piano by a combination of touch and pedaling; and the foot is for this purpose even more important than the hand, because, by pressing down the right pedal, the dampers are lifted and each string struck sets into sympathetic vibration others which enrich the resulting tone. A child cannot reach the pedal if it sits on the piano stool, but it can stand up, put its foot on the pedal, and after a while it cannot fail to notice and be pleased with the greater richness of the tone when the damper is raised by pressing the pedal.

Then open the piano and show what happens. The child will also be amused by seeing how the hammers dart up and fall back; and in such ways he can be made to look on the piano as an object of interest instead of an instrument of torture.

It must not be supposed that all this pre-keyboard training is only for future students of the piano. All girls and boys who intend to take up singing at the proper age, or playing the violin or any other instrument will be helped wonderfully by it; not only because every musician should play the piano more or less well, but because all pupils alike need this preliminary instruction, in all its details.

In this brief sketch I have been able, as a matter of course, to indicate only a few of the details. The

teachers entering this new field will soon devise many more.

P. S.—Since the above was written there has appeared a book by Satis N. Coleman, *Creative Music for Children* (Putnam's), which explains why so many children hate their music lessons and shows how, by letting them make their own crude instruments, such as birch bark trumpets, shepherd's pies, wheat-straw clarinets, drums, etc., they can be made intensely interested and thus led on from step to step to higher things.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW MUSICAL ATMOSPHERE IS CREATED

Dr. Eugene A. Noble, who has charge of the Juilliard millions that are to be distributed in behalf of music and musicians, presided eloquently over a meeting of prominent musical experts who discussed the question, "Has America a musical atmosphere, or must the American student go abroad for it?" I could not attend this meeting, so I will have my say here.

To begin with an extreme case: When I was a boy I did not have to go abroad to become a musical enthusiast. I lived in Oregon. There were no railroads in the State at that time. The nearest opera house or concert hall was in San Francisco, hundreds of miles away. But my father played nearly every instrument in the orchestra. He organized a band and a choir—just for fun—never made a cent out of it. At home we had chamber music and songs every day. I played the piano and the 'cello. My sister sang; so did my brother. I remember the tears of joy I shed when he sang Schubert's wonderful cycle, "The Winter Journey." Although I never became a professional musician (because the lure of journalism and literature was more

potent), I became thoroughly musical, thanks to the atmosphere my father provided—there in the wilderness, among the mammoth trees and with the glorious ever-snowy Mount Hood looming up as a giant background.

To pass from the sublime to the ridiculous (I mean from scenic Oregon to dingy Berlin), let us take the case of Felix Mendelssohn. As a child he was almost smothered by the abundance of musical atmosphere surrounding him. His mother was his first teacher. She began with lessons five minutes long, gradually increasing the time. Later on Ludwig Berger taught him the piano, Zelter composition, Henning violin; at the age of twelve Felix began to compose systematically. Quartets, concertos, symphonies, songs, and piano pieces came in rapid succession.

The dining room of the Mendelssohn house was on Sundays turned into a concert hall.

There was a small orchestra, and the programmes always included one or more of Felix's compositions. He himself conducted. This was on Sundays; but we read "music went on every evening, more or less . . . and there was a constant flux and reflux of young, clever, distinguished people, who made the suppers delightfully gay and noisy and among whom Felix was the favorite."

Primeval Oregon and sophisticated Berlin! Surely these two contrasting cases prove that musical atmosphere can be supplied anywhere, at any time, provided there are enthusiasts to create it. My

father's enthusiasm leavened the whole village near our place. The Aurora brass band always took first prize at the State Fair in Salem (now headquarters for loganberry juice, which is sweeter than beer—excuse the interruption).

IN GERMANY AND ITALY

The Germans got ahead of us in creating musical atmosphere because for generations every school-master had to play an instrument and instruct his pupils in singing, while in the churches the whole congregation sang harmonized hymns and Bach chorals, which developed the harmonic sense.

If an opera house creates musical atmosphere, then some European countries must be far ahead of us; for, Germany has 135 opera houses and Italy has 165, while this country has only two.

Does this prove that in Germany and in Italy there is more than a hundred times as much musical atmosphere as in this country? Perish the thought! The Italians are enamoured of opera. It's the one kind of music they care for. But how about orchestral concerts and recitals by great artists? Why, New York alone has more of them than all the cities of Italy combined. Ergo *we* are the more musical of the two countries!

How about Germany? Has it not, besides its 165 opera houses, countless music halls, the sporting ground of an endless procession of singers and players? It has. But the atmosphere created by

nineteen out of every twenty of these singers and players is about as wholesome as that of the Black Hole of Calcutta, in which so many English prisoners perished.

Look at England. For a year or two it had no grand opera company at all. Is there no musical atmosphere at all, therefore, in the British metropolis? This question brings us to the crux of our problem.

HOME-MADE MUSIC COUNTS MOST

As factories for the wholesale production of musical atmosphere, opera houses and concert halls are a mere side-show. I have before me Vol. IX of the *Papers and Proceedings of the Music Teachers' Association*. In it is an article by Paul Stoeving, late professor at the School and Trinity College, London, which gives glimpses of a much more prolific source of musical atmosphere.

In 1905 the National Union of School Orchestras gave a concert in Crystal Palace at which 700 boy and girl violinists played. Gradually that number grew until, the year before the war, it reached the grand total of 6,800 players.

Now, it wasn't the playing together of these 6,800 in the Crystal Palace that created any musical atmosphere worth talking about. Where the atmosphere was created was in the *homes* of these young players. "Six thousand London Board

School children playing the violin!" exclaims Prof. Stoeving.

"Let us consider for a moment what this means in the life of the nation. It means six thousand homes in Greater London—lower middle-class homes over shops of green grocers, bakers, and butchers in dingy streets, homes of city clerks and better-class artisans in green suburbs—six thousand homes in which music, or, rather, music-making, as gentle, enlivening, pleasure-giving, refining force has entered and made its abode in the guise of the fiddle and bow, where it has brought a new interest, a new joy, and a healthy stimulus to alleviate the depressing drudgery of daily existence, with the result that these homes can never be quite the same as the houses in which this miracle has not been wrought."

Moreover, in 5,000 public schools all over England orchestras have been formed, with a total of some 200,000 playing children. All these school children "will one day make eager, intelligent, and sacrifice bringing listeners" at concerts, thus helping the artists.

This music-making in school and the home is the breeze stirring the musical atmosphere in America as well as in England; perhaps we are even ahead of England. School orchestras are growing like mushrooms everywhere, and there are many other factors. I was almost startled on coming across a programme of a Western school: a dozen girls, each playing her own composition! It wasn't a conserva-

tory either—just a public high school—a single school out of thousands.

Add to these things the influence of phonograph records, of orchestras playing at the movies, of the radio, or wireless, scattering music broadcast for hundreds of thousands, and—well, we'll be lucky if the musical atmosphere doesn't sweep over us soon as a destructive tornado.

We shall still go to Europe, but only for fun, not for musical atmosphere!

CHAPTER XV

PRODIGES AND THE GIFT OF MUSIC

When Josef Hofmann came to New York in 1887 to give his first series of American concerts, he was only ten years old. In company with two other critics I called on his father to become acquainted with the wonderchild. Wagner's *Siegfried* had just been sung in New York for the first time, and I had in my pocket a copy of *Harper's Weekly* containing a double-page picture of the fight with the dragon. Taking little Josef on my knee, I showed him this picture. He was greatly interested, and then, looking at me with eyes wide open, he asked: "Are there any dragons in America?"

This same boyish boy played the music of the masters as few adults have ever played it. In Chopin's E minor concerto, in particular, I remember in the Romanza, his rendering of the bars marked *leggierissimo*; he made the grace-dots light as gossamer and accented the quarter tones in a significant way that he himself has not equalled since—nor has Joseffy, nor Pachmann, nor even Paderewski. It was unique—an inspiration from above; and often have I longed to hear those bars done again so poetically.

ABUNDANT WONDER CHILDREN

Child prodigies occur in diverse branches of mental activity. There was once an Italian boy named Jacques Inaudi who at the age of seven, could carry on mentally multiplications of five figures by five figures. In other words, he could multiply, for example, 34,967 by 84,434 without using pen and pencil—in fact, he did not learn to write (or read) till thirteen years later. Dante was only nine years old when he wrote a sonnet on Beatrice, and Tasso wrote poems at ten. At fourteen Raphael was already famous, so was Vernet at twenty. When Wetton was five he understood Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and five years later he had also mastered Arabic, Chaldee and Syriac.

Many similar cases might be cited, but in this article we must confine ourselves to prodigies of the musical persuasion.

These are by no means rare; and in saying this I do not by any means refer to the fact that nearly every locality has a child who is hailed as a prodigy. In regard to most of these, we may apply the conundrum: "When is a prodigy not a prodigy?" and the smart answer: "In nine cases out of ten."

As regards real prodigies, a magazine writer, George Wm. Winterburne, once made some laborious investigations which he printed in the *Galaxy* (1874). He found more than two hundred on record in the same number of years, all of whom achieved local celebrity previous to their seventh

birthday and, on reaching maturity, showed eminent talent. Let me briefly cite a dozen or so of these cases.

Charles Wesley, brother of the founder of the Methodist Church, had a son who, at the age of three, would put a true bass to the tunes he played. At twelve he performed the works of Handel and Scarlatti "so as to excel anyone in London at the time."

Tom Cooke, of Dublin, played a difficult violin concerto at seven, and five years later he composed for and played on nine different instruments.

William Vincent Wallace, composer of the still popular opera "Maritana," had produced two hundred compositions before he was fifteen years old.

An oboeist named Robert Boscha, played a concerto at a public concert when seven years of age, and a year later he composed a symphony.

Before Dr. Wm. Crotch was four years old, he could play tunes, with the chords belonging thereto.

The story of the Irishman who, when asked if he could play the fiddle, answered that he didn't know as he had never tried, is recalled by an incident in the life of Domenico Dragonetti. When nine years old he asked permission to play an accompaniment on the guitar. His father thought it a joke, but the accompaniment was played all right by the boy, who had some time previously hidden away an unused guitar and practiced on it secretly.

John Purkins, born blind, played the works of Handel on the organ so well when he was only

seven that he was called "Young Handel." John Stanley, also blind, was an acting organist at eleven, and two years later he was appointed official organist of St. Andrew's, London.

PAGANINI, CZERNY AND OTHERS

Paganini, when he was only eight years old, composed a sonata which was so difficult that no one but himself could play it. Another boy who became a famous violinist, Sivori, played, at ten, at one of the exclusive Conservatoire concerts in Paris.

Clementi was only nine years old when he was admitted as organist at Rome. Czerny, at ten, played Bach and Clementi so astonishingly well that Beethoven offered to take charge of him and give him lessons.

Among females Mr. Winterburn found a much smaller proportion of child prodigies—only one girl to every fifteen boys. Camilla Urso made her debut at the age of seven. Maria Theresa Paradies could perform the works of Bach at five. Pauline Viardot Garcia at the age of four spoke four languages, and three years later she was helping her father with his music lessons. Teresa Milanollo, when six years old, made a concert tour, giving violin recitals in Italy, France and Holland, arriving in London at the age of eight.

PRECOCIOUS COMPOSERS

This list of singers and players whose talent developed unusually early might be increased very much; but of greater interest still are the cases of precocious composers, concerning whom their respective biographers relate details that are still more astonishing because composing makes even greater demands on the powers of the brain than does the cleverest performing.

When Handel was a child he showed such a great liking for penny trumpets, drums and other musical toys that his father, who did not wish him to become a musician, destroyed these, and in other ways tried to suppress the "alarming symptoms of genius." The lad nevertheless succeeded in smuggling into the garret a clavichord, on which he played to his heart's content. At the age of seven he played the organ so wonderfully that the Duke of Saxe Weissenfels persuaded his father to let him be a musician. At eleven he astonished famous professionals in Berlin by his improvisations on organ and harpsichord. At this time he had already composed a set of trios for oboes which are considered more remarkable even than Mozart's productions at the same age.

Mozart is usually regarded as the prodigy of prodigies, and not without reason. When he had barely turned his third year he picked out simple harmonies on the harpsichord. He learned to play minuets when five years old, requiring only half an

hour to master one; and soon thereafter he wrote minuets and other pieces of his own. He was only six years old when his father took him on a tour during which he astonished all the world by his playing. In London, when he had just entered his eighth year, it was announced that "he plays anything at sight, and composes amazingly well." By the time he was ten he had a perfect craze for composing; at one time, when he was just recovering from a violent fever, he had a board rigged across his bed so he could write music without rising. At that age he knew as much about his art as most musicians do at forty.

Schubert's biographer, Kreissle, had good reason to declare that, with the single exception of Mozart, "in none of the great musicians was the creative faculty awakened so early, or made its way with such irresistible power, as in Franz Schubert." His teachers found he had everything at his finger's ends and soon outstripped their knowledge. That he composed music as a mere child is not particularly noteworthy, for many others have done that; what is remarkable is that, with the exception of Mendelssohn, he is the only master who composed immortal music before he was eighteen years old.

Beethoven's productions at such an early age were trifles in comparison; his genius matured slowly. As a player, however, he was precocious. He himself said that he began music in his fourth year. His father taught him to play the violin and clavier; but before the pupil was nine years old he knew

more than the teacher. At the age of ten he composed a funeral cantata, which was actually performed.

An amusing incident in the life of Haydn was his sitting on a bench at home with two sticks in hand, imitating the violin playing of the school-master. It was this that suggested the idea that he might have in him (he was only five years old) the making of a musician.

Mendelssohn began systematically to compose with his twelfth year; and when he was seventeen he wrote the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream," an inspired product which is really superior to anything he composed in his more mature years.

CHOPIN, LISZT, TCHAIKOVSKY

"A child not yet eight years old, who, in the opinion of the connoisseurs of the art, promises to replace Mozart"—in these words a Polish writer referred to Chopin after hearing him play the piano. At the age of nine Chopin appeared at a public concert. How far his musical talent was ahead of his general development at this time is shown by what he said to his mother, who asked him when he came back: "Well, Fred, what did the public like best?" "Oh, mamma," he answered, "everyone was looking at my collar."

Liszt got his first lesson on the piano when he was six years old. He took to music as a duck does to water, becoming so absorbed in it that he

avoided his playmates and their games. He remembered everything without effort. He wrote music before he had learned to write words, and there was coherence in the notes he jotted down. Falling seriously ill, he was reported dead, and the village carpenter actually began to get his coffin ready; but he soon recovered, and his skill was now more wonderful than before his illness. He could transpose a piece into any key he chose, and his cleverness in improvising was most remarkable. When, as a boy of nine, he gave a concert in Pressburg, it was this gift of improvising, in particular, that impressed his audience to such a degree that six Hungarian noblemen made up a purse to enable him to pursue his studies. Czerny was so delighted with the boy's achievements that, after giving him a dozen lessons, he refused all compensation therefor.

Tchaikovsky got his first musical impressions through a mechanical orchestrion which played a considerable number of pieces. When he reached his fifth year he played these pieces on the piano, to which he was so ardently addicted that he had to be taken from it forcibly. If this was done, he was apt to drum the rhythms with his fingers. One day he did this on a window pane so violently that it broke. At the age of ten he began to compose; that is, to improvise things of his own on the piano.

LOMBROSO'S MISTAKE

The late Professor Cesare Lombroso, in his book on *The Man of Genius*, takes the stand that precocity is likely to be morbid. The proverb, "A man who has genius at five is mad at fifteen," is, he says, often verified in asylums. "The children of the insane are often precocious," he adds.

That may be; but when we read the biographies of the great masters who were infant prodigies we find that while some of them were eccentric, and what we call "cranky," they were not really "cracked." To be sure, some great composers—Schumann, Smetana, Donizetti, Hugo Wolf, MacDowell—died insane: but the malady in most or all of these cases can be traced to causes not connected with any special ability shown in childhood.

Nor can we endorse the current notion that most prodigies die young. Winterburn collected facts which indicate that, on the average, men who were precocious live somewhat longer than ordinary mortals.

It is true that some of the greatest musical geniuses—among them Mozart, Schubert, Bellini, Chopin, Weber, MacDowell—died young; but I could show in each of these cases that death was caused by consumption, typhoid fever, over-work, or other causes not connected with early conditions of the brain or special manifestations of talent.

If we must, therefore, reject the notions that prodigies are allied to the insane and are likely to

die young, it is undeniable, on the other hand, that most of them disappear from the ranks. As Rubinstein has remarked: "The number of great masters is very small in comparison with the great mass of musically gifted children we admire every year, and who later fulfill none of their promises. Ordinarily, musical talent manifests itself in children at the tenderest age; but there comes a time (with boys from fifteen to twenty, with girls from fourteen to seventeen when this musical talent suffers a crisis, is weakened, or goes to sleep forever; only those who are able to pass this Rubicon become great artists; their number is very limited."

VARIOUS KINDS OF GIFTS

Fortunately, one can be a musical wonder child, or adult, in more ways than one. Those who fall short in one way may excel in another. Some acquire piano technic as instinctively as a newly hatched chick runs and scratches and picks up food. Others, to whom technic comes much more slowly and laboriously, play instinctively with expression, which is infinitively more important.

Thus, the gift of music is not a simple thing, but highly complex. Some persons are absolutely devoid of it. They are tone-deaf, as others are color-blind, or unable to tell the difference between a red dress and a black one. Between this and a Schubert there are endless degrees and varieties, usually quite independent of other mental faculties. Blind

Tom, though an idiot, could reproduce on the piano any piece he had heard once. I wonder if he could have reproduced the nuances of expression with which Paderewski plays a Chopin nocturne, as a phonograph does. I heard Blind Tom but once, and did not think of noting that point.

I have been told that one of our best American composers, Mr. Chadwick, cannot improvise. I know that Edward MacDowell could not transpose, at the piano, as so many minor musicians can, and that, like many other great musicians, he lacked the gift of absolute pitch. I once made an interesting test with Moritz Rosenthal. Asking him to turn his back on the piano, I struck the most unusual chords, and he promptly told me the component tones. Then I hit the keys at random with my fists—and still he told me the ingredients of this ultra cacophony!

This was as marvelous in its way as Hans von Bülow's reading a manuscript concerto away from the piano a few times and then playing it without looking at it again.

Our Stephen Foster easily created a number of immortal melodies, true folks songs; but in harmony he was a child, and he could not have written a symphony to save his life. Debussy, on the other hand, creates charmingly original harmonies and progressions, but his melodic gift is so weak that he tries to hide his defect by crying "sour grapes"—"Who wants melody in modern music anyhow?"

It is fortunate that the gift of music is so many-

sided; it gives all of us a chance to excel in some direction that best suits our own gifts. To become a good and useful singer, player, teacher, or even composer, it is not at all necessary to have been an infant prodigy, possessing the gift of music in an abnormal degree. To cite Rubinstein again: "Talent, even genius, will not go far without application. Without talent, but gifted with application, it is quite the contrary. Thus it is that genius slowly fades away, while the worker, in time, makes his work known."

There is a place for all workers. To be sure, all cannot be generals; there is need also of colonels, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, and many, many private soldiers. A corporal or a private may enjoy life as much as a general—or more, for "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." If you ever feel dissatisfied with your lot read the chapter "Are Great Artists Happy?" in my book *Success in Music and How It Is Won*, and you will find abundant cause for consolation—since "Misery loves company."

CHAPTER XVI

ARE MUSCIANS BORN, NOT MADE?

We have all read a thousand times that poets are born, not made. Is the same true of musicians? Are they born or made?

Let me say right at the start that it is easier to be a "poet" of some skill than to be a musician, however mediocre.

Anyone who can write a good letter can learn in a short time to express his thoughts in verse; in fact, one does not need to use verse and rhyme. Carlyle went so far as to say (I do not recall his exact words) that there is no poem that could not have been better still if expressed in prose. I am inclined to agree with him. The poetic thought's the thing!

When I was a student at Harvard I used to have foolishly violent disputes with George Edward Woodberry (whose collected poems and essays have recently been reprinted in half a dozen uniform volumes) as to which is the greater art, poetry or music. I remember his indignation when I said that poetic rhythms were positively childish in their simplicity compared with the endlessly varied and complicated rhythms in modern music. But every

musician knows it is so. Dr. Riemann, in his "Musik-Lexikon," declares "dass die musikalische Rhythmik unendlich reicher ist als die poetische." And it is getting more so every year. Any school girl can read at sight any poem placed before her; but to play at sight a modern composition requires years of hard study and practice, and some students never succeed in doing it easily. I need not dwell further on this aspect of the question. An endless amount of labor is required to read music at sight even if one is born with talent.

CARUSO AND PATTI

Was Enrico Caruso a born singer and musician or did he make himself one? The answer is "both."

At first no one believed he was a born singer. When he began to study, his voice was so thin and brittle that his fellow students called it a glass voice; perhaps, he said humorously, "because it broke easily." His first teacher, he related, "was very discouraging. His verdict was it would be hopeless to make a singer out of me."

That teacher was mistaken; but even after Caruso had become a singer he was still far from being a musician. He knew this as well as anybody, and he loved to tell his friends this joke on himself: "When I created Feodor in Milan, Verdi asked the names of the artists, and when he heard mine he interrupted: Caruso? They tell me he has a fine

voice, but it seems to me that his head is not in its place.' "

It wasn't, at that time! It was only by dint of hard, incessant daily study of technic, interpretation, and impersonation that he made himself a musician and an operatic artist whose untimely death the whole world mourned.

A friend of his, Konrad Bercovici, gives an amusing instance of how thoroughly Caruso had learned to control his facial expression—an all-important art for an opera singer. "Caruso's idea of caricature," he writes, "was frequently displayed when he would tell a tragic story with face set for some side-splitting joke, or when he would take on a serious and downcast expression to tell a very comical story. He was completely the master of his facial muscles. That mastery had been won by hours and hours of study in front of a mirror, and was the most disconcerting thing to his friends"

How about another, equally popular, opera singer known to all the world: Adelina Patti? Was she a born musician, or did she make herself one?

She, unlike Caruso, had a perfect voice from the very start. She was one of the favored few to whom singing came as naturally as swimming does to a fish, flying to a bird. She inherited her voice from her mother, who was an admired prima donna and her father, who had an agreeable tenor voice. "As a child," to cite her own words, "I was already possessed by a frantic love of music and the theatre . . . Only seven years old, I was asked to appear

as a concert singer, and I did it with all the joy and naiveté of a child. I was placed in a concert hall on a table near the piano in order that the hearers might be able to *see* the little doll, too, and, there was no lack of these or of applause. And do you know *what* I sang? That is the most remarkable thing of all nothing but florid arias, first among them 'Una voce poco fa' from the 'Barber of Seville,' with the same embellishment exactly that I use today, and other colorature pieces."

Surely a girl of seven who could, after only a few unimportant lessons by her brother-in-law, sing music like that with a voice and execution that made those who heard her wild with joy, was a born singer.

She was a born musician, too—up to a certain point. An aria like 'Una voce poco fa' calls for musicianly phrasing, a fine ear for pitch and pure tone quality; but Patti did not, like Caruso, work hard to make herself a greater musician than she was from the start. A book was seldom seen on her table and her friend Arditì relates that he could not interest her in even the lightest of all forms of intellectual exercise—novel reading. Mixing brains with music did not appeal to *her*.

No—Patti was a born singer, not a made artist. Throughout her long stage career she confined herself almost entirely to the kind of operas which do not call for brain work. To be sure, she had ambitions for more dramatic things. She told her friend Hanslick, for instance, that she was "no

buffa," and that she would some day give up Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and make her mark in the dramatic part of Donna Anna.

But she never did. Though she tried Carmen, Valentine in *The Hugenots*, Marguerite in *Faust*, these are not remembered as among her best impersonations. At seven times seven years she had not made herself enough of a dramatic musician to live up to them any closer than she was at seven.

Not that a dramatic singer is *necessarily* more brainy than a colorature warbler. But it certainly takes more brains and stage art to impersonate successfully the rôles just named than a part like that of the heroine of *La Sonnambula* who, in the words of Carlyle, has "nothing but mere nonsense to act or sing."

Now let us see whether the "Swedish nightingale" was a born or a made singer.

JENNIE LIND AND GERALDINE FARRAR

A cat was responsible for the early discovery of Jenny Lind's voice. When she was a little girl she had a pet, with a blue ribbon round its neck, to which she used to sing; sometimes in a window looking out on a much frequented street in Stockholm. One day the maid of a famous dancer heard her and reported her "find"; and thus it came about that she was taken in hand and trained for a musical career.

She was at that time, as she herself later on

wrote to the editor of a biographic dictionary, "a small, ugly, broad-nosed, shy, awkward, altogether undergrown girl." But she sang so beautifully that the Swedish government paid the costs of her musical education, on the condition that she should in time give her services to the national opera.

She was only ten when she first sang in public. Then for ten more years she worked hard—so hard that she wrecked the beautiful voice with which she had been born. In consternation she went to Paris to seek the aid of the most famous of teachers, Manuel Garcia. His answer was crushing: "It would be useless to teach you, Miss. You have no voice left."

It was then that Jenny Lind *made herself* a great singer and a good musician. At first, with the aid of Garcia, who made her promise not to sing a tone for six weeks. Then he taught her how not to use her voice incorrectly—it was that, and not overwork, that had injured it. She had to start all over again from the very beginning, singing scales up and down very slowly and learning how to breathe correctly.

It took her ten months to recover her voice under Garcia's guidance. But that was only the beginning. To her teacher she was eternally grateful. And yet, she could say truthfully in later years: "As to the greater part of what I can do in my art, I have myself acquired it by incredible work."

Mme. Birch-Pheiffer relates that one day she left Jenny Lind practicing the word "zersplittre,"

occurring in an air from the "*Freischütz*"; and when she returned, several hours later, she found her still wrestling with that "jawbreaker."

Casting back a glance at her career we see three important things: She was born with a fine voice, but it took a good *teacher* and a great deal of hard *work* to make the Jenny Lind of immortal fame.

Mendelssohn summed up the secret of her success in three words: "Talent, study, enthusiasm."

Talent, study and enthusiasm have also been the secret of Geraldine Farrar's success, although she had, in addition, great personal beauty and greater skill in acting than Lind.

"Enthusiasm!" I remember the time when Geraldine (we have called each other by our first names ever since 1907) was so completely absorbed in her work, so enthusiastic over her operatic parts, that she couldn't, or wouldn't, talk about anything else. With all her exceptional intelligence and conversational brilliancy, it made her, at times, almost boresome. But it was the right thing. I don't believe she ever dreamed about anything except her operatic impersonations.

Compare this with the attitude of the average girl student who, after memorizing a few operatic airs like a parrot, goes to New York to a fashionable coach who, she expects, will launch her on the Metropolitan stage in a few months. Of the complete, absolute absorption and concentration essen-

tial to success these students evidently haven't the faintest conception.

Geraldine Farrar was born for the stage. Her favorite amusement as a child was to "play opera singer." At seven she got her first piano lessons. At fourteen the *Boston Times* spoke of her as "a young girl who has a phenomenal voice and gives promise of being a great singer." A few years later she was enrapturing the usually coldly critical public in Berlin with her personal beauty, the loveliness of her voice with the morning dew still on it, and the rare charm of her acting. Here was an artist who could both sing and act such parts as Zerlina, Marguerite, Juliet, Mignon, Elizabeth, Cherubino, Manon, Violetta, while she was still appropriately young and beautiful. Youth and beauty, to be sure, are less important on the stage than good singing and acting; but when all four are present, who could fail to be enraptured?

There was consternation in Berlin when it was announced that this American beauty had been engaged by the Metropolitan Opera House, where she was soon getting a thousand dollars and more for each appearance.

Many young women would have had their heads turned by such brilliant successes and rested on their laurels. Not so Geraldine Farrar. Like Jenny Lind, she was impelled by every triumph to do her utmost to deserve another and still greater. Every time she went to Europe she renewed her lessons

with Lilli Lehmann, feeling more proud of her praise than that of the newspapers. She showed me one day a letter Mme. Lehmann sent her after seeing her as Elizabeth in Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. In this Mme. Lehmann said among other things: "I must tell you once more that it was an *extremely* beautiful and good thing, and that you will not, perhaps, succeed again in making it so infantine, demure, and saintly, even with this slight impulse to live and love. It was very beautiful and just as I wanted the role done. We have worked together for a good purpose."

With all her inborn advantages and good schooling, Geraldine Farrar is nevertheless mostly self-made. Every familiar part is entirely made over by her, and every new part she assumes gets her undivided attention for months.

Like another great American operatic artist—Lillian Nordica—Geraldine Farrar might say: "Plenty have natural voices equal to mine, plenty have talent equal to mine, *but I have worked.*"

Nordica, also, was both a born and a made musician. Likewise Emma Eames. And so were scores of other prominent artists I could name.

INFANT PRODIGIES AND COMPOSERS

It does not follow that because great musicians are invariably both born and teacher-made or self-made, all those who are born with special musical talent become great musicians. How far this is

from being true is shown by the general belief that infant prodigies rarely keep their promise; and there is a good deal in this belief. There are conspicuous exceptions—among them Josef Hofmann and Franz Liszt.

Liszt was such a wonder in his childhood that it seems absurd to suppose that he had to make himself a pianist. But remember what he did. In Paris, after he had astonished the musical world with his pianistic achievements he disappeared, shut himself up in his studio and for many months worked incessantly and indefatigably to make himself the Paganini of the pianoforte. He was born a good pianist but he made himself the greatest of them all.

"Most of the great composers," I wrote in *Wagner and His Works*, "have manifested their special talent at so early an age that they may be classed as musical prodigies. Wagner, by his own confession, was not a prodigy; and when his operas began to make their way in the world, in spite of the unprecedented opposition of critics and other philistines, his opponents frequently brought forward this fact to prove that he could not be considered a genius.

"They forgot that most prodigies are doomed to early oblivion; that Beethoven found his first music lessons as irksome as Wagner did, and even shed tears over them; and that Weber, in his eighth year, was accosted by his teacher in almost the same words that Wagner's teacher used: 'Karl, you may

become anything else in the world, but a musician you will never be.'

"But it is hardly worth while to take the argument of Wagner's opponents seriously. Modern science has shown that the higher an organism, the longer it requires to reach maturity, as we see, for example, by comparing men with lower animals. The fact that Wagner's genius matured slowly might therefore be looked on as a presumption in his favor, rather than otherwise.

"The principal reason why Wagner did not astonish the natives by his feats as a wonder child is that his mental powers were not focused into one gift or talent, as in the case of most musicians, but that he was, in childhood as in manhood, many-gifted, like his stepfather."

I think I have said enough now to prove that genuine and famous musicians are both born and made. Though slow to develop, the brains of Weber and Wagner had the germs of genius in them from the start; but they worked hard—oh, so hard!—to make themselves immortal composers. And always they mixed their music with brains.

CHAPTER XVII

IS MUSIC A MERE LUXURY?

A famous American novelist, on being asked by a friend of mine what he thought of music, replied: "Oh, I see no harm in it!"

There are in this country a good many honest folks to whom music seems only a superfluous pastime, harmless enough but rather foolish, and certainly quite useless.

During the great war some matter of fact men went about the country preaching that in order to win we must cut out non-essentials; and often the first named was music. This caused James Francis Cooke to begin a Fight in Defense of Music. At his request I wrote for the *Etude* an article on "Important Uses for Music," which is herewith reproduced. In reading it, please remember the date of its appearance, July, 1918. The statements made in it are, however, eternal truths, good for all time. Not to know what music is good for is to argue yourself very ignorant indeed. The article follows:

One of the most touching war stories from France has been told by a nurse about a soldier who was brought in on a stretcher. Though hungry, thirsty, sleepy and much in need of a dressing

for his wounds, his idea of "first aid" was a piece of music! When he had heard that, his nerves were calmed.

Another witness declares that "the men on the other side drop all the boast songs, all the military songs, and sing almost solely the sentimental and pre-war songs." These give them what they need in camp—relaxation and entertainment.

There is a story about the famous operatic baritone, Maurice Renaud, singing Wolfram's *Song to the Evening Star* from *Tannhäuser* to the French soldiers in the trenches, which were so close to the enemy's line that the Germans joined in the applause.

This may be fictitious, but it calls attention to the fact that many singers as well as players devoted their time going from camp to camp, bringing solace and entertainment to hundreds of thousands of soldiers, very much in need of it.

WORLD WAR UPSET ALL IDEAS

The great world war not only upset all previous ideas of military tactics, but of military music as well. Trench warfare did away with the time-honored function of the band marching at the head of the troops and inspiring them with courage for the coming battle.

What bands are now used for is to provide entertainment and lessen home-sickness in camp; to stimulate and sustain soldiers on the march; to

rouse the bystanders and to encourage recruiting.

In the Bible there are frequent references to the encouragement given to warriors by music, as, for instance, in Chronicles, where the victory over Jeroboam is attributed to the encouragement derived from the sounding of the trumpets by the priests.

Everybody knows that patriotic hymns like the Marseillaise have been a great help to the guns and bayonets in winning battles. They are even more effective than brass bands in arousing patriotic sentiment, ardor, and self-sacrifice, because it is more inspiring to help make music than merely to listen.

For this reason the military authorities of the United States, like those of other countries, are doing all they can to foster singing among the soldiers. Our boys in France have been called "The Silent Army," but that is being changed. The comparative silence has been due to mere diffidence. A number of musicians are now engaged in overcoming this diffidence. A little instruction works wonders. As Havrah Hubbard relates in a letter to Leonard Liebling, editor of the *Musical Courier*:

"I went out Wednesday to Camp Merritt with Robert Lloyd, who is the pioneer in the songleader work in the camps. At 11 A. M. he had brought before him in the Y. M. C. A. building 1,500 artillery men who had arrived in camp only the day before, who came to the Y. M. C. A. direct from a long hike, tired and not knowing why they had been ordered to report. There did not seem

to be a song in one of them. In half an hour by the watch Lloyd had taught them five songs, one of them an old artillery song which was not easy, and at the end of the time the men left the hall rested, smiling and laughing, buoyant of step, and the majority of them singing or humming the songs they had learned.

"Down at Quantico I saw Wilson take 300 men whom he never had seen before, and in half an hour they had learned six songs and went out of the hall singing lustily. And about the camp at Quantico you hear the men singing in the bunk houses, on the streets, at their work and on liberty."

Field Marshal Lord Wolseley, in a preface contributed by him to *The Soldier's Song Book*, wrote that "troops that sing as they march will not only reach their destination more quickly and in better fighting condition than those who march in silence, but, inspired by the music and words of national songs, will feel that self-confidence which is the mother of victory."

MUSIC A REAL NEED NOW

That music is one of our most essential assets in wartime is strikingly proved by the preceding facts. Similar details are appearing daily in the newspapers and the musical press; whole volumes might be filled with them.

Let us therefore hear no more nonsense about

music being a mere luxury, like a sumptuous feast or a superfluous accomplishment like dancing. We can give up dancing with impunity and we can benefit by cutting out elaborate repasts; but we cannot give up music in wartime without taking away a great soul tonic and lowering the morale of both soldiers and civilians. Music helps to win the war. To oppose it is an act of disloyalty, of treason to our country.

One of the few redeeming features of the war is indeed that it has emphasized the utility of music, and has shown how closely this art is interwoven with our soul life. But its function as a stimulant, tonic, and consoler in the army is only one of many uses for music. There are a dozen others, which I will consider briefly. And what I wish to emphasize particularly is that these uses are not recent products of civilization but are, and were, known even to barbarians and savages thousands of years ago. Therefore those who speak of music as a mere luxury or a non-essential put themselves below these primitive men in their lack of comprehension of the vital functions of music.

Anthropologists tell us that there are tribes so low that they have no dwellings and no clothes, but none so low as not to have some sort of music, to which they are passionately addicted.

Changes and improvements have, of course, been made, particularly in war music. Grey relates that in Australia among the aborigines four or five old women can with their singing stir up the men

to commit any bloody deed; and Wallaschek says of primitive music that instead of softening manners it too often, on the contrary, "inspired the savages with a desire for fighting, it aroused their anger, excited their fanaticism, and by accompanying their war-dances, also, in time of peace, it aroused their lust for war." From such uses for music we have travelled a long distance in the right direction.

RELIGION AND THE DIVINE ART

Martin Luther preached that next to religion music ranks highest among the spiritual and moral forces. Would those men who assert that music is a thing that can be spared in war-time have the audacity to go and ask the ministers of the Gospel to banish the divine art from the churches?

At all times and in all countries religion and music have been inseparably associated. The Puritans are only a seeming exception. It is true that they removed organs from churches and caused the choir books of some cathedrals to be destroyed; but Henry Davey has shown that it is not true that music was forbidden or discouraged by them. Cromwell was a musical enthusiast, and so were Milton and other Puritan leaders.

Bishop Potter declared that the history of music is the history of religion. This is true in the sense that, since time immemorial, every church in every land has had its characteristic tonal service, varying

from epoch to epoch. This is one reason why music is called the divine art. Another reason is that it exalts the mind like the contemplation of things supernatural. Yet we are asked to "cut it out" in war-time as a "non-essential." For shame!

Military music makes it easier for soldiers on the march to endure muscular fatigue. In many of our factories the girls contribute a mite from their daily earnings to pay one of their number for reading or singing for them.

Among more primitive peoples the utilitarian element of music actually overshadows the artistic side. Wild tribes find it a great aid in stimulating them to work. The books of missionaries and explorers abound in allusions to this function of music. Collingwood, writing about Borneans, says that "the boatmen, as usual, enlivened the way with their songs, some of which were wild and musical. They all joined in the chorus . . . keeping time with their paddles. The song was cheerful and inspiriting, and seemed to help them along." Roth, another writer on the Borneans, says that "Mr. Grant preferred his boatmen to sing, for it *made them pull better.*"

The African explorer, Winwood Reade, found that his negroes, when he ordered them to row, began to sing as an aid to overcoming their natural laziness. James Grant, in his *Walk Across Africa*, says that when the negroes who formed his escort were cleaning his rice, they were always supported

by singers who accompanied their work by stamping their feet and clapping their hands.

Thus, at all times and in all parts of the world, the value of music as an aid and a stimulus to work is abundantly attested. Details regarding this function of music would fill another big volume. To cite only one more: Among the ancient Hebrews, we read, "the grape-gatherers sang as they gathered in the vintage, and the wine presses were trodden with the shout of a song; the women sang as they toiled at the mill, and on every occasion the land of the Hebrews during their national prosperity was a land of music and melody."

THE ONLY REMEDY FOR GRIEF

Music is also the great consoler in times of anguish, after the loss of a relative or friend. I deeply pity those who cannot at such a time sit down at the piano and play a funeral march by Chopin or Beethoven, or the thrilling chords of *Aase's Death* from Grieg's *Peer Gynt*. Such music at first makes the tears flow more freely, but then follows a calm—a vision of a heavenly hereafter which Chopin, with the inspired psychological insight of genius, put into tones in the melodious middle section of his *Funeral March*.

If music is a "non-essential" why is it introduced at nearly all funerals? Everywhere is this done, and has been done the world over at all times of which there are records. Here again those who

would cut out music in war-time show themselves below the level of barbarians and savages, who invariably express their grief in songs of mourning or instrumental dirges. Hundreds of cases in point might be cited. I prefer, instead, to quote a few eloquent remarks on the bagpipe as a mourning instrument, made by Vernon Blackburne in an article on *The Music of the Gael*. He dwells on "the cry of the pipes, and the immeasurable sadness of the Scottish tunes," and continues: "As you wait by the coffin of the dead, you hear the dim sound of the Coronach as it grows keener to your hearing. The pedal-note is a long monotone of grief, an enduring moan for the thing that has been. The melancholy and windlike harmonies that are blown above that note hither and hither, fall to the varying mood of the mourner, who finds, it may be for the first time, with wonder and dismay, that to the human heart, even the sense of loss must, in its acutest knowledge of the present, take a relief and a change which seem almost a treachery.

"Such music as this," the writer continues, in what is one of the most magnificent sentences in all musical literature—"such music as this, thus played, and on this instrument, once more, in its gloomy and magnificent completion, shows that in the mourning for the dead Scotland triumphed unto the attainment of the culmination of her musical art."

Among primitive races the function of the priest is commonly combined with that of the medicine man. That is, the same man who undertakes to

conciliate or frighten the devil, also pretends that he can, with his musical orgies, expel the demon who is supposed to be responsible for a case of illness. Many African tribes have special musical doctors, who play their instruments, ring bells, and perform various foolish antics around their patients. In British Columbia this Indian doctor has—or had—a band of assistants who, while he sang in the house near the patient, intoned a chorus on the outside, while beating time on the low roof with sticks.

The Walla Walla Indians made convalescents sing by the hour—which was not a bad idea, because singing expands and strengthens the lungs—another of the important uses of music—and leads to deep breathing, which is the most powerful and immediate of all tonics.

Of course, the medicine men's antics were mostly tomfoolery. It is not on the body direct that music has an influence, but on the mind. More and more the tonic and even curative effect of music is recognized in asylums for nervous and mental invalids. In many institutions there are bands made up entirely of the patients, and testimony is unanimous as to the remedial value of music under these circumstances.

In this country concert audiences are usually made up almost entirely of women. Men are usually "too busy" or "too tired" to attend them. They would change their mind if they could be made to realize the truth of Plato's contention that music

is a powerful tonic which does for the mind what gymnastic exercises do for the body. We might change the comparison and say with equal truth that an immersion into music is as soothing and refreshing to the mind as a Turkish bath is to the body. In these days of exceptional nervous strain, what could be more valuable than such a tonic?

MESSAGES AND SIGNALS

One of the most important war-time uses of music lies in its employment in the army for military signals. There are dozens of different bugle calls, each of which means as definite a command to the troops as if words were used. It remained for Wagner to show what subtle artistic use could be made of such "signals," by his system of leading motives.

The Maruns of Sierra Leone have fixed calls for each of their friends by means of which they can summon them at any time—a very serviceable arrangement, especially on hunting expeditions. Certain horn calls are played in the Ashantee army to indicate the position of the chief during a battle. An African negro never mistakes the meaning of a drum beat, knowing instantly whether it summons to war or merely to a dance.

SOCIAL GATHERINGS AND WEDDINGS

The list of important uses for music is inexhaustible. Let me refer briefly to two or three

more of them. At social gatherings, how often is it resorted to when conversation flags, and how often does it form the climax of the evening's pleasure!

Social gatherings on a large scale are the community chorus "sings," which have in recent years become a sort of musical cult, like religious revivals, which they rival in their serviceableness.

The supreme social festival is a wedding, and a wedding without a march is as great an anomaly as a church service, or a funeral, or a political meeting, without music. Shall all these things be dropped on the amazing contention that music is a "non-essential" in war time?

Funds have been collected by the hundred thousands to supply our soldiers in the trenches with tobacco; and it is worthy of note that some of the contributors are men who do not believe in smoking. As we have seen, some of the boys prefer music even to tobacco as "first aid." They are surely entitled to it; and so are we who live through such anxious days at home. Not only because, as Shakespeare attests, music has the power of "killing care and grief of heart," but because it is the most innocent of all amusements.

Three cheers, I say, for our musicians and our music teachers. By keeping up our spirits and in many other important ways they are helping to win the war.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ROMANCE IN MUSICAL HISTORY

As a lad of eighteen, Robert Schumann went to Leipsic with the intention of studying law at the university. But while he was enrolled as a *studiosus juris*, he was very much more interested in music. Looking about for a piano teacher, his choice fell upon Friedrich Wieck, partly because of his fame, but largely also because Wieck had a daughter who, though but nine years old, already played astonishingly well; indeed, she began her public career as a pianist the following year. Schumann concluded that a man who could produce such results with his daughter must be a good teacher. He was also interested in this bright and talented girl, whose name was Clara, and spent many hours telling her fairy and ghost stories.

That was the beginning of the most romantic of all musical courtships.

In accordance with the migratory custom of German students, Schumann spent the following year in Heidelberg, but in 1830 he returned to Leipsic and not only continued his lessons with Wieck, but for two years lived in the same house with him, being treated as if he were a member of the family.

On one occasion, when Clara was to play at Zwic-kau, Schumann wrote to his mother that the thirteen-year-old prodigy would give her much to think about. The two met; they happened to be looking out of the window when Robert passed, whereupon the mother clasped the girl in her arms and said: "You must be my son's wife some day."

Never was there a more romantic lover than Robert Schumann. When he was twenty-three, she fourteen, he wrote to her suggesting the following plan for mitigating the pangs of temporary separation: "Tomorrow, precisely at eleven o'clock, I shall play the adagio of Chopin's Variations and at the same time think intently and exclusively of you. I beg you to do the same, so that we may meet and see each other mentally."

CLARA'S RIVAL

To move our feelings a piece of music must have its dissonances as well as its concords of sweet sound. The same is true of a love story. The course of true love never did run smooth, as the greatest of poets has told us; certainly that of Clara and Robert didn't.

The first discord was the appearance of a rival. On one of her concert tours Clara had made the acquaintance of a girl named Ernestine von Fricken, who came with her to study with Wieck. Just at that time Wieck sent Clara to Dresden to study theory with Reissiger. During her absence Robert

became more and more interested in Ernestine. He described her as "a delightfully innocent, childish soul, tender and pensive, attached to me and to everything artistic by the most sincere love, extremely musical—in short, just the kind of a girl I could wish to marry."

He had suffered from fits of despondency because success came to him so slowly; his doctor had advised him to marry; Ernestine loved him; he thought he loved her; they became informally engaged, and he gave her a ring when she left Leipsic; but after her departure he soon discovered that it had been only a momentary infatuation—"a summer-night's dream." He found she had not told him the truth regarding her parentage; her letters were painfully ungrammatical—he contrasted them, and her personality, with Clara's, and he awoke from his dream to find that, after all, *she* was the girl he really loved.

As for poor Clara, she was greatly distressed when she came back home and heard that Robert was engaged to Ernestine. She started on a concert tour, but her heart was no longer in her work. "Clara plays reluctantly and seems disinclined to do anything," her father wrote from Hamburg.

Fortunately, the foolish episode with Ernestine came to an end soon, and Clara was happy again. In his diary Robert noted that he got his first kiss from her in November, 1835; she had lighted him downstairs and he had declared his love. "When you gave me the first kiss," she subsequently wrote

to him, "I thought I should faint away; all was black before my eyes; I could scarcely hold the candle that was to show you the way."

Robert felt that the rival had been inconsiderately treated. "I cannot deny that an injustice has been done," he wrote to Clara some years later, "but the misfortune would have been greater, it would have been calamitous, if I had married her; for, sooner or later, my old affection for you would have returned, and then what a wretched situation—we should all three have been horribly unhappy."

Ernestine did not despair; she felt that Clara had had a prior claim to Robert's love. She married another in 1838. Three of Schumann's compositions are dedicated to her.

AN ANGRY FATHER

Like a thunderbolt in a blue sky suddenly came Wieck's furious opposition to his daughter's love affair, which some unknown person had revealed to him. He addressed her in the rudest manner, threatening to shoot Schumann unless he broke off with her at once, and making her give him all the letters he had written to her. Robert had given her on the preceding Christmas some pearls, and "pearls mean tears" she was told. She shed many of them, while her father, day after day, abused her lover and she could not see him. For more than a year they did not meet or exchange letters. Wieck tried to give the impression that Clara had

given up Robert. He sent her his F sharp minor piano sonata, which he dedicated to her, and of which he once said that it was "one long heart-cry for her;" but he got no answer to this echo of his passion.

Such situations bring out what is best in a man's genius!

A year later Clara played this sonata at a public concert in Leipsic. It was a bold thing to do, for Schumann was not yet acknowledged a great composer. He was among those who heard it. "Did you not guess," she afterwards wrote to him, "that I played this work because there was no other way of revealing to you something of my inner life? Privately I was not permitted to do this, so I did it publicly. Do you suppose my heart did not flutter?"

Of this interesting mingling of life and music there is much in Schumann's years of courtship.

Girls in love are great diplomats. One day (in the year preceding the concert just referred to) she sent a friend whom she could trust to beg Robert to give back his letters to her which her father, a year previously, had compelled her to return to him. His heart beat violently when he got this message. Even more than the playing of the sonata, this proved that she still loved him. He replied that he was going to keep the old letters, but that she could have as many new ones as she pleased, and gave a sample to the messenger, together with a bouquet. In this letter he begged her to write him

a simple "Yes;" and she answered: "Merely a simple Yes you ask for? It is such a short word—but how important! Yes, should not a heart so full of inexpressible love as mine is be able to utter that word with all its soul? I do it—from my inmost depths I whisper to you an eternal Yes."

Wieck did not relent. On Clara's eighteenth birthday he withheld from her a letter Schumann had addressed to her. She knew of it, and wept for days. In a later letter, which came into her hands, Robert says: "In vain I seek an excuse for your father, whom I had always considered a noble man. In vain I seek for his refusal a worthy, cogent reason, such as your youthfulness, or the fear that a premature engagement might harm your artistic career. But that is not it—believe me, he would throw you into the arms of the first man of wealth and title who comes along. His highest aim is concert giving and traveling; for this he lets you bleed, ruins my power and impulse to create things of beauty for the world, and then laughs at all your tears."

LOVE AND MUSIC

In a later letter he says: "What deprives me all at once of the power to create? If I improvise at the piano the result is chorals, if I compose I do it without thoughts—except one, which I am eager to paint on everything with big letters and chords—CLARA."

And Clara, in turn, thought only of him when

she played. After describing the excitement she created at a concert in Prague, and the many recalls, she adds in her letter: "The thought of you while I was playing enthused me so that the whole audience became sympathetically enthusiastic."

In another letter, written in Vienna, she says: "Although the Emperor, the Empress and others conversed with me, need I tell you that I would rather talk with you?"

"So the Kaiser spoke with you?" he replies. "Did he not ask you: 'Are you acquainted with Signor Schumann?' and did you not answer: 'Slightly, your Majesty.'"

Then he begs her, in the same mood, to try not always to play so well; "for every enthusiastic demonstration will make your father more inclined to withhold you from me."

Wieck by no means underrated Schumann's genius; on the contrary, he was one of the first to appreciate it. "He speaks of you" writes Clara, "to everybody with the greatest enthusiasm, and asks me to play your pieces. The other day he gave a large party (at which the leading poets of Vienna were present) solely to have them hear me play the *Carnaval*, and in February he wants me to play your *Toccata* and the *Etudes Symphoniques*."

For a time, indeed, Wieck was in a conciliatory mood. He was willing to let Robert marry Clara provided they promised not to make their home in Leipzig, where their humble circumstances would contrast too much with the affluence of Mendels-

sohn and David. "One thing is certain," he wrote in his diary, "Clara must never live in poverty and seclusion, but must have an income of 2000 thalers a year."

On this point Clara agreed with her father. She had previously written her lover that while she did not desire horses and diamonds, she did wish to feel sure that her wants would be provided for, and that she need not give up her artistic career.

She was quite able to support herself, but on that point Schumann had views of his own. The career of a loving wife and mother seemed to him above that of a concert giver; and as regards teaching, he once wrote her: "That you give lessons is well, but when you come to be my own you must not do that any more; it will then be *my* duty."

Apparently, however, his income, in 1838, was only \$750 a year (of which some \$75 came from the sale of his compositions). To this, she wrote to him, she could add the same amount (\$750), if they lived in Vienna, by giving one annual concert, and another similar sum by giving one lesson daily.

In one respect Schumann did not share the opinions of his time regarding woman's sphere and powers. He did not discourage Clara's efforts to compose, but assisted her, the result being that she wrote some of the best songs ever penned by a woman, songs which, oddly, reflect Mendelssohn's style and spirit rather than Schumann's. In 1839, however, she wrote modestly: "There was a time

when I thought I had talent for composing, but I have changed my mind. A woman ought not to want to compose; none has ever succeeded in it. Should I be destined for it? To think that would be an exhibition of conceit to which no one but my father formerly could have prompted me."

MORE DISCORDS

Wieck had asked for a delay of two years and his daughter had consented; so Robert fixed the marriage date for Easter, 1840; but many things happened in the meantime.

The lovers found opportunity for many more or less clandestine meetings, and when they could not see each other they sought solace in their art. "How love does make one appreciative of all that is beautiful!" wrote Clara; "music is now quite a different thing to me from what it used to be . . . Oh, how beautiful is music, how often my consolation when I feel like weeping."

Wieck introduced other men of distinction to Clara in the hope that she might give up Robert; but in vain. "Strange!" she wrote, "but no other man pleases me, I am dead to all; for one only do I live—for my Robert."

When Wieck found that this method led to no results, his wrath increased. Clara saw him write "never will I give my consent" and doubly underscore the words; whereupon she wrote to Robert: "What I had feared has happened; I must do it

without his consent, without the parental blessing. That is painful! But what would I not do for you! Everything, everything!"

If that is the case, Robert answered, if he will never consent, why wait two years—why not take the law in our hands and get married at once? He had transferred his home and his weekly paper, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, to Vienna, because Wieck had promised to consent to his marriage anywhere except in Leipzig; but that, he found, had been a mere ruse to gain time. Wieck became more and more agitated. He threatened that if his daughter refused to give up Schumann he would disinherit her and begin a suit that would last four or five years.

For a time Clara was intimidated. She wrote Robert that the marriage would have to be postponed unless he could bring legal proof that his income approximated \$1500 a year. He figured out what he got from several sources, and it barely exceeded \$1000, which, however, seemed to him quite sufficient for a loving couple. A second letter from Clara on this subject displeased him so that he destroyed it. However, peace was soon restored, and Robert now proceeded to write a note to Wieck in which he once more formally demanded his daughter's hand. "We are in need of rest after these terrible struggles; you owe it to yourself, to Clara, and to me."

Wieck now gave his consent, subject to six conditions regarding residence and Clara's property

and inheritance, conditions which made it impossible to regard it as a real compromise: "There is nothing left but to invoke the courts," Robert wrote to Clara. "The breach is beyond repair . . . Yet depend on it that friendly relations will again be established later on. He is, after all, the father of my dear, good, hearty Clara, and I promise you that when once we are united, I shall do all I can do to conciliate him."

THE LAST CHAPTER

When Clara refused to accept her father's conditions he became more furious than ever. He wrote her a letter which, as she informed her lover, was "so extremely insulting that I asked myself in dismay if it could have been written by my own father." He also refused to hand over to her the money she had earned at recitals, on the ground that she owed it to him in payment for the thousand lessons he had given her.

His conduct for a time resembled that of a madman rather than a parent. Clara's chief rival was the popular pianist Kamilla Pleyel. To her Wieck paid great homage, accompanying her to her concerts, turning her leaves, and indulging in other acts calculated to hurt his own daughter. When the court took up the pending suit, he talked so vehemently that he had to be called to order. He accused Schumann of being a heavy drinker—a false

charge which caused the lovers inexpressible agony.

The mania for persecution reached its climax in an anonymous letter Wieck wrote to Clara, containing violent denunciations of Schumann. He expected her to get this letter just before her first great recital in Berlin, which he hoped it would turn into a failure by bringing her to the verge of nervous prostration. Fortunately the recital had to be postponed because of a slight injury to her hand.

The court to which Wieck had applied dismissed, after a year's delay, his charges as trivial and insufficient. As he did not appeal the case, there was no further impediment to the marriage, which was quietly celebrated on September 12, 1840. What Schumann had called "superhuman patience" was rewarded by a happy union, both conjugal and artistic. Without neglecting her domestic duties, she continued to play, making the world acquainted with her husband's masterworks, which she still inspired by her sympathy, as during their days of courtship. Wieck was conciliated and happiness hovered over the household.

CHAPTER XIX

MUSICIANS NEED PLENTY OF HEALTH

If singers, players, teachers and students knew how much success usually depends on health, books on hygiene would be their favorite reading; yet not once in my life have I seen a book on this subject in a musician's library!

To be sure, most professional musicians are little addicted to the reading of any books, even on musical subjects—the more's the pity; for by this neglect of literature they lose a great deal of labor-saving guidance and helpful inspiration. In the present paper I wish to call attention to some of the things hygienic needed by women and men, young or old, to make them fit for the musical life.

WHY RICHARD WAGNER SUFFERED

It surely cannot be said that Richard Wagner was unsuccessful. In the face of tremendous difficulties and virulent opposition he wrote nine or ten operas that are now acknowledged by all the world to be masterworks—the best stage-works in existence. His is, in fact, a unique record, for whereas most opera composers produced only one or two, or, at most, four or five works of lasting value, all

of his productions, beginning with *Tannhäuser* and ending with *Parsifal*, have proved of enduring worth, as we can now safely say, for he was born more than a hundred years ago and has been in his grave forty. Yet, great as was his success, it would have been greater still had he enjoyed better health. No man ever revealed himself, both physically and mentally, more thoroughly in his letters than Wagner did. Great is the number of these letters, and I have reviewed all of those that have been printed. While reading them, I have become more and more convinced that had he enjoyed better health he might have written half-a-dozen more masterworks of lasting value. Surely, therefore, his life was not a complete success.

Ill health cast a cloud over the greater part of it. It not only prevented him from delivering to the world all that was in him, but it was, as Liszt once suggested to him, the source of much of his misery and pessimism. Of his pitiable sufferings, mental and physical, I have tried to give an idea in the chapter, "A Modern Prometheus," in *Wagner and his Works* (Vol. I, pp. 365-74.)

Had he known more about hygiene he might have escaped most of these physical sufferings and much of his mental anguish.

One of the conclusions I reached from a thorough study of his career is that the three years of semi-starvation in Paris, when he was quite a young man, paved the way for all his troubles. Dyspepsia was the fiend that tormented him;—chronic indigestion,

that manifested itself in the dozens of unsuspected forms for which this malady is infamous. Sometimes he could work only two or three hours a day. In September, 1852, one short hour was all he could endure daily.

Like other brain workers, he maltreated his organs, eating too fast, and making the stomach do the work intended for the teeth. He tried all sorts of "cures" and "fads," and "isms," including vegetarianism; but all in vain.

And now comes the strangest part of the story. Some years ago I received a very interesting letter from Dr. George Gould, the eminent oculist, of Ithaca, N. Y., in which he informed me that on reading my Wagner biography and other documents in which his chronic ill-health is spoken of in detail, he had come to the conclusion that the great composer suffered from eye-strain, and that that was the ultimate source of all his troubles.

Eye-strain is a condition which greatly weakens the stomach, besides doing much harm in other ways. Dr. Gould has written a book on this subject in which Wagner's interesting case is considered in detail. I commend it to all musicians, who suffer from dyspeptic troubles, headaches, or other torments that refuse to yield to the ordinary remedies, and who are prevented by these troubles from doing their best. Many physicians, otherwise excellent, have not looked into this matter as carefully as they ought to.

It is odd—and maddening—to think that if Wag-

ner had worn the right kind of spectacles he might have composed several more *Lohengrins* or *Tristrams!**

HOW TO CURE DYSPEPSIA

If dyspepsia is not caused, or aggravated, by eye-strain—as, of course, in many cases it is not—other remedies are called for than scientifically made spectacles. The best of them by far is eating very slowly and chewing the food until it disappears down the throat without any conscious effort to swallow it. This *seems* very easy, and it *is* easy. The difficulty lies in *keeping it up!* Few do it.

Some kinds of food, however, particularly fats (which most of us need for bodily strength) are not digested by the saliva secreted in the mouth. For a complete cure of dyspepsia it is therefore necessary to supplement fletcherizing by a simple process fully explained in the chapter entitled “Digestive Value of Sour Salads” in my book on *Food and Flavor*, and in the section headed “A New Psychology of Eating.”

In stubborn cases of dyspepsia it is necessary also

*Since writing the above I have, as stated in another chapter, come to the conclusion that Wagner's persistent ill health was also due in large part to his suffering from intestinal sluggishness, as described in Dr. Kellogg's *Colon Hygiene*, *Autointoxication* and *The Itinerary of a Breakfast*. The last of these books, in particular, being brief and vivid, if read by every person in the musical world, would begin a new era of health, happiness and success.

to take plenty of exercise in the air, walking, rowing, playing golf or other games, or indulging in home gymnastics, with open windows.

Let no one say I am attaching too much importance to this matter. It is not only a question of success. What's the use of success unless you can enjoy life? And you certainly cannot enjoy life, if you are all the time uncomfortably aware of the fact that you have a stomach. When I read that John D. Rockefeller has been obliged for years to live on crackers and milk I asked myself, "Would I give my health for his wealth?" and the answer was a most emphatic "No."

Nor is this all. A famous bass once said to me that "good singing is seven-eighths a question of digestion." It is said that Malibran virtually ruined her career by injudicious eating; and she is not the only one by any means. I know that one of the most famous tenors of our time failed to be re-engaged for the Metropolitan because he maltreated his stomach, in consequence of which he was seldom in good voice.

David Bispham was once quoted in *The Etude* as saying that "being in bad voice is oftener than not a matter of digestion, and not of the voice at all. If one would sing well, the last meal should be taken four hours before singing."

You have often read of great singers traveling in private cars; but probably you do not know that in most cases the principal reason for this is that these artists wish to have their own cooks with them, as

the meals in American hotels are very rarely good preparation for a song recital.

GREAT COMPOSERS AT TABLE

Gluttony in our day is considered almost as reprehensible as drunkenness. In Handel's time a man could eat like a wolf and not lose caste. The great composer one day entered a restaurant and ordered dinner for three. It was so long in coming that finally Handel asked what was the matter. The waiter replied that he was waiting for the guests. "Guests?" roared the composer—"there are no guests. Bring on that dinner!"

It was otherwise with Beethoven. One day, after he had been sitting in an inn for an hour or two, plunged in deep thought and paying no attention to any one, he thumped the table and asked for his bill. "Bill?" exclaimed the astonished waiter; "you haven't had anything!"

Of a different class from these two was Rossini, a true epicure. It was he who remarked that the turkey was an unsatisfactory fowl, because it was usually too big for one and not big enough for two. But this was obviously only one of his jokes, for there is reason to believe he was a gourmet and not a gourmand, or glutton.

He was, however, more than half serious when he declared he ought to have been a cook, and that he might have been one had not his early education

been neglected. As it was, it sufficed for his becoming famous, at any rate, as a salad-dresser.

Several persons have expressed surprise that I, a musical writer, wrote a book on food. Why not? I wrote magazine articles on the subject forty years ago. My extensive studies in musical biography have shown me, also, that musicians naturally are interested in good things to eat. The greatest pianist of our time is a noted epicure. It was my good fortune one summer, while I was writing that book, to be the guest of Paderewski for some weeks at his chateau in Morges. He had a chef from Paris and Madame Paderewski gave personal attention to the table, on which delicacies of all kinds abounded. But what I wish to call attention to is that while the great pianist-composer has all these luxuries before him, he indulges in them with moderation, especially when he is composing or preparing for a concert tour. Unlike so many musicians, he never sacrifices art, duty and health to food and drink, and that is one important reason why he has been so exceptionally successful.

MUSICIANS DO NOT SLEEP ENOUGH

Like many musicians, he does not take enough sleep. It is quite the usual thing for him to be up and busy till two or three in the morning. To be sure, he rises late, and, furthermore, his sleep is exceptionally deep and psychologists tell us that a deep sleep of five or six hours' duration is more

refreshing than a superficial, uneasy sleep of eight or ten; which may explain why his health has not suffered seriously from this cause. But he is an exception—a Hercules of nervous strength and will power.

One of the chief disadvantages of a musical career is the necessity of so often keeping late hours, and many aggravate the evil by congregating after performances in restaurants to eat, drink, talk shop and quarrel, when they ought to be soundly asleep.

When I first became a musical critic, I did "as the Romans do," but soon found that I was burning the candle at both ends and gave it up. To my iron will in thus disregarding the allurements of what are, after all, rather dubious "pleasures," I attribute much of what success has come to me; for I find that I am seldom at my best in writing unless I have had eight hours of sleep, one or two of them before midnight.

Schopenhauer wrote that he did not regard as parts of his life the days that were not preceded by a night of sufficient sleep.

FRESH AIR AS A TONIC

What aggravates the evil in many cases is that so large a proportion of men and women—musicians among them—habitually sleep with their windows closed, which is a slow, but sure way of committing suicide.

Singing is one of the most beneficial things one can indulge in, because it induces the habit of deep breathing, which fills the lungs with an extra amount of life-giving oxygen. But if you sing in a stuffy room, or an unventilated concert hall or opera house, the deep breathing does more harm than good. What are absurdly called "colds" are in most cases not caused by the draughts (unless you are perspiring).

The dread of night air, which is responsible for so many closed windows, is a survival of the time when malaria was (as the name—"bad air"—indicates) supposed to be caused by night air. It is now known as an absolute certainty that malaria is not spread by night air, but by mosquitoes, and that if you use screens and care you will never catch that disease, or yellow fever, either. Therefore, leave your windows open and increase your health—and with it your chances of lasting success by thirty per cent.

HOW TO AVOID CATCHING A COLD

The last time I was on the Pacific Coast I was surprised and delighted to find how many persons and families, all the way from San Diego to Portland and Seattle, slept, not with their windows open, but, what is far better still, out in the open altogether. Go thou and do likewise. You will not catch a cold from doing so. Colds are never caught out in the cold. They are caught in overheated,

unventilated halls or rooms. If we avoided these, colds would cease to exist; they are a germ disease and germs do not flourish in the cold.

Arctic explorers never have colds, nor do soldiers who live in tents or without shelter of any kind, sleeping on the ground in zero weather. I have read of one case where a troop of soldiers kept in perfect health this way until, one evening, they found shelter in some houses. Roaring fires were built, and the next day a number of the men had colds!

Of course, it would be risky for persons who have been brought up like hot-house plants to try experiments in zero weather. But it is safe for anyone to begin on a warm summer night, and gradually get used to it. *

Speaking of hot-house plants, the reader may have heard the story of Hans von Bülow, who objected to playing in an overheated room on the ground that he was a pianist, not a palm. One summer a pianist

*In colds, above all things, a stitch in time saves nine. For many years no cold has got the better of me—why? Because, as soon as I feel like sneezing, I take two pellets of homeopathic *Bryonia alba* No. 1, and several more, an hour apart. Also, I soak at once two little wads of cotton in warmed Listerine or some other harmless antiseptic, insert them in the nostrils and sniff up the liquid. It hurts, but only a few seconds, and the germs are dead. In case of catarrhal trouble, lie down and sniff till some of the liquid reaches the throat via the nostrils. Hold on tight to the cotton. The relief is instantaneous and delightful.

in a London concert hall had to break off in the middle of a piece and leave the stage, because he was overcome by the heat.

VENTILATION AND BATH TUBS

It is worth while to repeat a couple of paragraphs from *Success in Music*:

"Musicians should protest on every possible occasion against the voice-murdering, spirit-depressing air in which they have to sing and play in theatres and concert halls. Often this air is hot, stuffy, stale, foul—so foul that if it could be made visible to the eyes it would look, compared to fresh air, as a mudpuddle looks compared to a mountain stream.

"If a picture of this air could be thrown on a screen the audience would stampede for the doors as if some one had raised the cry of fire. This detestable air injures the chances of an artist's success in another way: It makes audiences become tired, listless, bored, indifferent, unapplausive, and inclined to leave the hall, simply because there is no oxygen, no ozone, to breathe. Insist on the proper ventilation of the halls you are to appear in. If there is a chance, help to lynch the architect."

Time was when bathtubs were scarce and personal cleanliness a rarity. Today it is admitted that cleanliness is next to godliness; yet this doctrine is not applied internally. Few would care to bathe in a tank in which hundreds have washed them-

selves; yet, owing to the stupidity of architects and the criminal indifference of the owners of public halls, the hundreds and the thousands who are crowded into theatrical and musical auditoriums breathe over and over again the air that has just gone through the lungs, the mouths, and the nostrils of dozens of other people. It's nauseating to think of it—hideous, detestable, abominable. Alas, for the rarity of imagination, the abysmal ignorance of physiology! The time will come when no one will enter a public hall unless it is hygienically ventilated.

MARCELLA SEMBRICH SETS AN EXAMPLE

Every afternoon, when I have time, I take a long walk in Central Park, and often I meet only a few dozen persons in its full length of two miles and a half. Yet there are many thousands who could as easily find time to walk as I do. The value of fresh air and exercise is not appreciated as it should be.

An exception to this rule is Madame Sembrich. Nearly every day during the years she sang in New York she walked all the way around the big reservoir in Central Park. When I was preparing my *Success in Music* I asked her how she succeeded in preserving the youthful freshness of her voice. There were several things she referred to, but the first and most important was the good care she took of her health mentioning her walks in the

Park, and her daily summer climbs in the Tyrolean or Swiss mountains.

It has been frequently noted that the present craze for automobiling has harmed the cause of music because many now "blow in" in touring the money they used to spend on music. But there is another way in which the autocar is doing harm. It is such an agreeable mode of going about, that most singers use it constantly, refusing to walk even five blocks. It is only the successful ones who can afford to do this, but they may as well be told that they are shortening their years of success by thus neglecting healthful exercise.

GOUNOD, BIZET, BRAHMS, TCHAIKOVSKY

The foregoing remarks may prove of use to all sorts of persons in the musical profession. For the special benefit of the composers, whose number is so fast increasing in this country, let me add a few words of advice given by Gounod to his twenty-year-younger contemporary, Bizet: "Do not make haste! All will come in due time. Do not accept the first idea that presents itself, in the belief that there will be no others. Be severe with yourself. Let me advise you never to work at night. Such work is done *in a feverish condition* and the result is that in the morning you are dissatisfied and feel compelled to do it all over again."

There are exceptional cases of persons who can

create sanely at night; but Gounod was right in general. Work done in a "feverish state of mind" is not healthy work, or likely to be successful.

The attitude of Brahms is one which every musician should ponder deeply. *He was ashamed to be ill, because he felt that he had not made proper use of the intelligence given him to preserve the health which was essential for his creative work.*

Tchaikovsky, on the other hand, was a persistent sinner against the laws of health. "The more reason I have to be happy the more discontented I am," we read in one of his letters, and in another he refers to his "unfortunate characteristic of exaggerating evil and not sufficiently rejoicing over the good." His feelings, like Wagner's, almost always assumed a superlative degree. As in Wagner's case, too, his hopeless moods were often a simple consequence of poor health. He inherited from one of his grandfathers an epileptic tendency, and instead of curing this by a hygienic life he aggravated it by many bad habits. It is as well to be frank on this subject; we can learn from the faults of great men as well as their merits. He sowed his wild oats as a young man; at Moscow—a city given, according to his own account, to gluttony—he ate too much, and he always drank too much tea, coffee, wine, and brandy; he marred his sleep by overwork, by reading in bed, by not leaving the windows open at night. There were times when he was on the verge of insanity; indeed, there were rumors more than once that he had lost his

mind; and in some of his letters he gives a humorous account of the obvious surprise—or apparently disappointment—of some of his visitors on finding him perfectly sane!

CHAPTER XX

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED

Of all the strange things in the records of music none is more extraordinary than the almost incredible fact that Richard Wagner was forty-four years old, and had written all but three of his operas and music dramas before a single one of them was produced at Vienna, Munich or Stuttgart; that he was fifty-six and over before Italy, France and England began to stage even his early operas!

This amazing fact regarding the career of the man who is now universally regarded as the greatest opera composer of all times and countries, should be printed on pasteboard in huge red letters and hung up in the room of every music teacher and student. It would do more to teach ambitious young men and women patience and perseverance than volumes of pedagogic exhortations.

The other day a young American composer indulged in piteous caterwauling in the musical papers because the conductor of one of the great orchestras of this country couldn't find time to examine a manuscript he had submitted to him. The composer declared that his "life ambitions" had been wrecked by this rebuff!

This was an extreme case; but the country is

full of young composers who think they are being maltreated because, when they have succeeded in getting a few songs or piano pieces, or an orchestral work printed, the whole musical community does not immediately start a torchlight procession to proclaim them immortal geniuses. I can sympathise with these poor fellows, for I was in a similar state of mind when my first book, *Romantic Love and Personal Beauty*, was published. I was as sure as sure can be that it would bring me \$100,000 and immediate world fame; for love, I knew, interested young men and women more than anything else in the world, and this was the first historic and scientific book on the subject. I soon learned to be modest and patient.

Had I not learned this then, I surely would have learned it later on when I studied the life and read the letters of Richard Wagner. Job did not suffer as many misfortunes and disappointments as the creator of the modern music drama. Most people have a vague knowledge of the divers trials and tribulations he was subjected to. It has occurred to me that the more definite knowledge to be gained by a bird's-eye view of these hopes deferred and persistent failures before triumph was achieved, might be welcomed by readers of this book, especially those who, if at first they don't succeed need to be exhorted to "try, try again."

Failure threatened the very start of Wagner's life—failure to live. One of the consequences of the great battle of Leipsic was an epidemic of

typhoid fever which carried off Friedrich Wagner when his little son Richard was only six months old. The babe also had an attack, a mild one fortunately, so he escaped; but for four years the state of his health worried his mother.

PARISIAN DISAPPOINTMENTS

Failure was written all over Wagner's earliest attempts to show the world what he could do. Largely, this was due to his overweening and precocious ambitions. At the age of five, having decided to learn to draw, he wanted to begin by painting life-size portraits of kings. At thirteen he started to translate Homer's "Odyssey."

His debut as a composer was as humiliating as it could have been. At the age of sixteen he perpetrated an orchestral overture so complicated in texture that, in order to facilitate the reading of it, he wrote it in three kinds of ink, red for the strings, green for the woodwind, and black for the brasses. He himself has related how, at the performance of this work, the audience was at first astonished at the perseverance of the drum player, who had to tap his instrument fortissimo every fourth bar throughout the piece; how this astonishment gradually changed to obvious disgust and ended in an explosion of general laughter, to the young composer's great discomfiture.

More disappointing still was his first operatic venture. As conductor of the opera at Magdeburg

he brought out his *Novice of Palermo* (*Liebesverbot*, based on Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure"). The second performance was to be for his own benefit. The audience consisted of the composer's housewife and her husband, a Polish Jew in full costume, and a few others. The curtain never rose on this performance because of a strike among the unpaid singers, and the composer's hopes were dashed once more.

Three years later, when he was in Paris, he tried to bring out this same opera at the Théâtre de la Renaissance. Everything promised well, when suddenly this theatre became bankrupt. Thus the score of the *Novice of Palermo* had the curious fate of being frustrated twice by the failure of an operatic institution.

He had gone to Paris because he believed there were much greater opportunities there for an ambitious young composer than in any German city. Meyerbeer's brilliant success there particularly dazzled his eyes. But Wagner was no Meyerbeer—thank heavens! Paris had no use for him—didn't want either of the two viable operas he had so far composed, *Rienzi* and *The Flying Dutchman*.

Nor did it want his *Faust* overture, which he composed after hearing an inspiring performance of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* by the famous Conservatoire Orchestra. The conductor of this orchestra, Habeneck, was willing to try it, but the directors declared it "a long enigma" and decided not to play it in public.

Three years (1839-42) Wagner spent in Paris, and they were three futile years, except in so far as they gave him welcome opportunities to hear French master works splendidly performed at the Opéra.

Stooping to conquer, and urged on by the pressure of poverty and debts, he wrote an ordinary carnival vaudeville; but the actors declared that his music could not be sung, so it was given up.

In despair, he tried to earn his living by seeking a job as a chorus singer in a small Boulevard theatre; but the conductor, in Wagner's own words, "discovered at once that I could not sing at all, and that he had no use for me."

Nobody in Paris wanted his fine settings of several French poems, so he sent them to *Europa*, a periodical published by Lewald, whose terms were \$2.50 to \$4. In forwarding them, Wagner begged the editor to be sure and give him the maximum, as he needed the money. He also wrote short stories, arranged popular operas for piano, and indulged in other forms of irksome drudgery to pay for his bread. One day, as Praeger relates, he was in such traits that he begged his wife to pawn her jewels. "I have already done so," she replied.

IGNORED AND MALTREATED AT HOME

The first ray of encouragement came with the offer of the Dresden Opera to stage his *Rienzi*. To pay his way back to Germany he sold the li-

bretto of his *Flying Dutchman* to a French composer for \$100. *Rienzi*, in Dresden, was a huge success, because it was not Wagnerian, being in the style of Meyerbeer, who was then the fashion; but when the first really Wagnerian opera, *The Flying Dutchman*, was produced in the same city—it was a flat failure. It had previously been refused by the managers of the royal opera in Liepsic and Munich. In Dresden, after its first production, in 1843, it was not heard again till twenty years after! At Cassel it was brought out five months after the Dresden première, and at Berlin, in 1844; then for exactly ten years no opera house at all produced it. In Vienna it was not heard till 1860; in Munich and Stuttgart not till 1864 and 1865, while Hamburg even waited till 1870, so slowly did his operas travel at first.

“You are a genius, but you write such eccentric stuff it is hardly possible to sing it.” This was said to Wagner after the first performance of his next opera, *Tannhäuser*, by the first Venus, Schroeder-Devrient. *Tannhäuser*, also, failed to make its way at once. After its Dresden production, four years passed before it was heard elsewhere—at Weimar; and there only because the conductor of the opera was Liszt, who made it his business to produce the works of neglected geniuses.

Liszt, too, was the first to produce that superlative master work, *Lohengrin*, which later, for decades, was the most popular of all German

operas. Dresden had an ideal cast for it; but although Wagner was one of the conductors there he could not persuade the manager to stage it, and the Dresdeners did not hear *Lohengrin* till twelve years after its creation. When it was produced in 1859 at Leipsic—where Wagner was born forty-six years before—the third performance “was given before an empty house, and so was the fourth at reduced prices.” This was the city which, as the histories inform us, had been raised by the efforts of Mendelssohn and others to the rank of the musical center of Germany!

SILENT SIX YEARS—WHY

Is it a wonder that for six years after the composition of *Lohengrin* Wagner did not write another note? To enlighten the world as to his operatic aims and principles, he wrote a number of literary essays and pamphlets, but nobody paid the slightest attention to them. He was living in Switzerland and Italy, an exile from Germany because of his participation in the revolutionary uprising in 1848; he knew his operas were being horribly maltreated and misinterpreted, but he could not return to Germany to mend matters without risking capture and the scaffold.

One of the things he did in desperation was to publish a guide to the correct performance of *Tannhäuser*, a wonderfully instructive pamphlet, which he sent to the various royal opera houses. It was

ignored by all but two or three of them. In Munich many years later, the six copies sent by Wagner were found in the library of the opera house with the leaves uncut! (The reader will please pardon the frequent exclamation marks in this article, but nearly everything the Germans did to their men of genius, and particularly to Wagner, is so astonishing that the mere recording of it calls for an !.)

I wish all readers of this article who are despondent because at first they don't succeed—or don't have as much success as they think they deserve—would peruse pages 365-382 in the first volume of my "Wagner and His Works"; two chapters headed "A Modern Prometheus" and "The Circus Hülse in Berlin." In the first I attempted to paint Wagner as "a modern Prometheus, whose vital organs were daily gnawed at by the critics and other Philistines because he had had the audacity to steal from heaven the fire of genius—a blaze which showed their own lights to be mere tallow candles." His letters to Liszt are full of utterances of despair like these: "My nights are mostly sleepless—wearied and miserable. I leave my bed to see a day before me which is destined to bring me not one joy. Oh, that I should not arise from my bed tomorrow, awake no more to this loathsome life."

The Circus Hülse, as the sarcastic Hans von Bülow called the Royal Opera in Berlin, was the scene of the most astounding farce ever enacted over an opera—a farce so long-drawn out that *Tannhäuser* was not heard there till more than ten years

after its première at Dresden, and until after forty other cities had heard it! For the details of this farce, which I culled from about fifty of the letters that passed between Wagner and those he had to deal with, there is of course no room here. They throw a glaring light on one phase of German "Kultur"—the habitual maltreatment of genius.

Incredible as it may seem, the same institution repeated the same farce, equally prolonged, with the Nibelung operas, two decades later!

The large cities, like Berlin, Vienna, Munich, Stuttgart, were the last to accept his operas. What paltry sums he got for the performing rights of his operas may be inferred from the fact that Berlin balked at the thought of paying \$750 for *Tannhäuser* and Munich would not listen to such a sum as \$500. Hamburg refused to pay \$250, while Leipsic (his native city!) found \$140 exorbitant! Breslau paid about \$80; Würzburg gave \$37; Cologne could not, for a time, raise \$50 for this opera; and the smaller cities ranged from that sum down to about \$25! These payments were made but once, so the "mine" was soon exhausted. In 1852 he wrote: "I must deem myself lucky if during this whole year I get something from Weimar for *The Flying Dutchman*."

Thus he was reduced to "absolute destitution," to use his own words. "Thanks," he adds sarcastically, "to the noble assistance of glorious Germany." Had it not been for Liszt, Frau Julie Ritter, and a few other devoted friends, that desti-

tution—caused by the fact that everything he tried proved a failure—might have driven him to suicide, which frequently suggested itself to his mind.

All this time, too, he was tortured by ill health, which often made it impossible for him to compose more than two or three hours a day, even in the inspiring air of Switzerland. Studying the symptoms of his illness—dyspepsia, insomnia, rheumatic heart trouble and erysipelas—in the light of recent books, I have come to the conclusion that his trouble was autotoxæmia. The point is of superlative importance because experience with over 100,000 patients shows that three-fourths of all who are not in robust health suffer from the same self-poisoning as Wagner did. Of all obstacles to success, ill health is the greatest.

LAMENTABLE FAILURES IN LONDON AND PARIS

For years the *Tannhäuser* overture has been the most popular piece in the orchestral repertory of all countries. In 1855, when it was played in London for the first time, there were hisses and, as Liszt wrote to Wagner, "Klindworth and Remenyi were almost the only ones who had the courage to applaud loudly."

Nevertheless, Wagner accepted an offer of the conductorship of the Old Philharmonic Orchestra in London. He did this because he was hard up for cash, and he was offered \$1,000 for the season! This is not a misprint. One thousand dollars for

a whole season of Philharmonic rehearsals and concerts Richard Wagner got in London in the year 1855, when he was forty-two years old and at work on the *Walküre*! (Jean de Reszke afterwards got \$2,500 for a single performance in one of Wagner's operas in New York.) The foolish man even believed that out of that \$1,000 he might be able to save a few hundred francs to take back to Switzerland! The season lasted 102 days, and his pay was therefore \$9.50 a day!

At that time Wagner was a famous man, else he would not have been invited to London. As a matter of course, there were Wagner concerts galore? Not one! His friend Praeger saw the directors and found that they "feared hazarding the reputation of their concerts by the devotion of a whole evening to Wagner!" A few excerpts from his operas he was allowed in the programs, but the critics fell upon them like rabid wolves. Everything he did was censured because he conducted differently from the English music-god of that time, Mendelssohn. "I live here," he wrote Liszt, "like one of the lost souls in hell."

The tide turned at the seventh of the eight concerts, because of the attitude of Queen Victoria. "She and the Prince," Wagner wrote to Liszt, "were really the first persons in England who dared to come out openly and without reserve in my favor"; and at the final concert there was an ovation for him. But he did not take any money back to Switzerland, where he resumed work on the

Walküre. Foolish man! He didn't know that he would have to wait twenty years before he could get that work performed.

"I must perform a miracle to make the world believe in me," he wrote two years after his London fiasco. He borrowed two hundred francs of Liszt for a trip to Paris. In that city and in Brussels, he gave three concerts in 1860, with great financial hopes. Result: a deficit of \$1,100.

Then a miracle did happen. Napoleon ordered a performance of *Tannhäuser* at the Opéra! Everybody knows what followed; how the members of the Jockey Club, angered by Wagner's refusal to insert a ballet in the second act, indulged in noisy demonstrations that caused the composer to withdraw the opera after the third attempt at a performance. Net result for him: His royalty was \$100 for each performance. Three were given, making his earnings \$300 for a year's hard work and oceans of annoyance. This is at the rate of nearly half a dollar a day! However, as I observed in my Wagner biography, "the main thing was that the Jockey Club had had its fun. Bull fighting was forbidden in Paris at that time on the ground of cruelty; but composer-baiting—ah, that is quite another affair."

WAGNER-BAITING IN GERMANY AND AMERICA

"German newspapers have made haste to intone over the fall of a German in Paris songs of joy,

full of open or disguised scorn, and hollow tirades," said a journal published in Frankfurt.

Undaunted, undiscouraged, and ever hopeful, Wagner, on his return, continued his work on the Nibelung operas. They were to have their first hearing at the Bayreuth Festival, for which he had been working two decades like a beaver amid countless obstacles. We now look back on this festival as the biggest event in the history of music—certainly of German music; but the German newspapers tried in every possible way to thwart it, and three times it had to be postponed a year. They even got up a lying smallpox scare to keep people away. Leading newspapers like the *Gartenlaube* (circulation 400,000) declared that the German nation had "absolutely nothing to do with the Bayreuth performances"—this "simian disgrace" (*Affenschande*), as one of the leading critics called it. The financial outcome of the festival was a deficit of \$37,500.

Bear in mind that Wagner was sixty-three years old, and not yet appreciated! But he persevered and hopefully began to compose his last opera, *Parsifal*. If at first you don't succeed. . . . That opera, produced in 1882, the year before his death, was a success, at last, from the start!

I do not see how any one can read the romantic, stormful, pitiable story of Wagner's life without often shedding tears of pity, and of wrath at his countrymen, who habitually treated him like a criminal. But there was much Wagner baiting in

other countries, too, including ours. Indeed, in the whole history of anti-Wagnerism there is nothing more disgraceful than the boycott on Wagner's works, not only in the opera houses but in the concert halls of America, after we entered the war. He had been dead thirty-six years, yet he alone of all the dead masters was shut out for months—in Boston and other cities for a whole season. Yet of all the German composers of the past or present he was the one whom we should have continued to cultivate and foster; for *he was one of us*.

For twelve years he was an exile from Germany, condemned to death if caught, for he had taken part in the revolutionary uprising in 1848. On June 14 of that year—listen to this!—he delivered a fiery address which was printed as a newspaper extra in Dresden. In it he demanded, besides general suffrage, nothing less than the complete abolishment of the aristocracy as well as the standing army, and the proclamation of Saxony as a republic!

Seventy-one years elapsed before the Great War brought about what Wagner had explicitly and ardently wished. Yet this man was singled out for an American boycott of his immortal works!

CHAPTER XXI

DON'T BE TOO AWFULLY DIGNIFIED

Incalculable harm has been done to the cause of music by the notion many high-class musicians have that they must be always solemn, dignified and ponderous, heavy to the point of dullness, avoiding all approach to levity—to lightness of humor or temperament, as if it were unbecoming to one of their profession.

One summer, when I was spending a few weeks at a certain hotel in Switzerland, a talented young English professional pianist was among the guests. She was asked by some of the girls to play a waltz for them to dance to, but seemed offended at the request. She didn't know, poor dear, that some of the greatest composers delighted in playing waltzes for their friends to dance to. In the days of Chopin and Liszt there were social gatherings in Paris at which these two geniuses played dance music together, and the guests made the best use of the opportunity.

Schubert was never so happy as when he was playing waltzes for his friends. There were regular meetings in Vienna called Schubertiads, because he was the soul of them. "Occasionally" (I quote from my *Songs and Song Writers*) "the ladies were in-

vited and there was dancing as well as singing, Schubert sitting at the piano and improvising those lovely waltzes and other dance-pieces of which many were afterward written down. One evening a policeman entered and commanded the dancing to stop—because it was Lent—greatly to the annoyance of Schubert, who exclaimed: “They do that just to spite me, because they know how I love to improvise dance music.”

This same prince of melodists used to amuse his friends by singing his highly dramatic song, *The Erklings*, through a comb, in the most tragic-comic manner. It is said that he was annoyed when Hüttenbrenner arranged this song as a waltz; but from all we know of Schubert, we may be sure that this was not because he considered it undignified, but because it was badly done.

All the great masters, from Bach to Beethoven and Brahms, wrote dance music in abundance. Even Wagner has a waltz in one of his music dramas—*The Mastersingers*. Tchaikovsky introduced a waltz in one of his symphonies—and think of the glorious waltzes written by Chopin! Many of Grieg's pieces are Norse dances. The waltzes of Johann Strauss may not be as “dignified” as Bach's *B Minor Mass*, but they are none the less works of true genius, which deserve a place on classical programs.

RAISINS BUT NO GRAPES

Schopenhauer used to scold the Germans for their habit of abusing their men of genius and not paying homage to them till after they were dead. "Why," he asked, "always eat raisins and never fresh grapes?"

I often think of him when looking at orchestral programs. Their makers never hesitate to include in them "raisin" suites by Bach or other masters made up of old-fashioned medieval dances like courantes, allemandes, sarabandes, minuets, pavanes, gavottes, gigue, and so on; but they draw the line at modern dances still in use in our concert halls, apparently because they consider these undignified. Are fresh grapes, pray, less respectable than dried raisins?

Hans von Bülow was a notable exception among conductors. One of his principles was that just as a well-made bill of fare includes olives and ice cream and cake, so a concert program should always be lightened by a delicacy like a Strauss waltz. For many years I have been preaching this same doctrine, but it is seldom that it is adopted by conductors.

When Paur was at the head of the Boston Symphony Orchestra he once put two Strauss waltzes on his sketch for a New York program, possibly to pacify me; but, although these numbers were announced, they were withdrawn because, as I was told, men in authority were convinced it would be

undignified for an exalted orchestra to indulge in such levity.

Poor fools! Composers as widely apart as Wagner and Brahms had one thing in common: their admiration of the waltz-king. Everybody has heard of Mme. Strauss's fan on which Brahms had written the opening bars of the *Blue Danube* waltz, with the words: "Alas, not by Brahms."

The New York Philharmonic, the oldest orchestra in America, and in my opinion, the best in the world, has a pleasant habit of providing its subscribers every year with one or two extra concerts at which only Strauss waltzes and Sousa marches and that sort of thing are played. These are relished as much as the regular "dignified" programs. But why not give those who are not regular subscribers a chance, too, to enjoy this light music, superbly done, by including such a tidbit on each program of the season?

THE CORNERSTONE OF THOMAS'S SUCCESS

Theodore Thomas, the pioneer conductor, who did more than any other musician to educate the American public to an appreciation of the best music, was wise in his day. When visiting Vienna he often went to hear Strauss's dance music as conducted by the great Johann himself, so that he might reproduce its best effects at his own concerts in New York. "No one," writes his widow in her admirable "Memoirs," "knew the value of a good

piece of popular music so well as Thomas, and he was always on the lookout for such dainty musical tidbits and would take infinite pains to make them effective."

She recalls his arrangement for orchestra of Schumann's *Träumerei*, ending with muted strings "piano, pianissimo, pianississimo," as he said. He instructed his violinists, in order to emphasize the effect at the end, to continue drawing their bows over the strings without making a sound. The audience imagined it still heard the sounds floating off to an immeasurable distance, till Thomas broke the spell by quietly laying down his bâton.

Maybe it wasn't very "dignified" to do such a thing, but, as Mrs. Thomas relates, when her husband began to travel with his orchestra, his little arrangement of Schumann's exquisitely dreamy piece "created such a sensation with the public everywhere that it *might almost be called the cornerstone of his success.*"

Another thing that Theodore Thomas did in his shrewd efforts to enable the general public to glimpse the beauties of the best music, was that he did not hesitate to select the best movement of a great symphony and play that alone in order to give the people a chance to digest it. Pedants abused him therefor, but *he* knew, if the pedants didn't, that not much more than half a century earlier Viennese orchestral conductors actually used to interpolate vocal numbers between the several movements of a

symphony, in order to make it easier for the audience to assimilate the orchestral pabulum.

For many people, listening to an elaborate composition in four movements is as difficult as mountain climbing. They need an occasional rest, time to breathe, and if they don't get it they conclude the game isn't worth the candle. Concert givers and solo recitalists too often forget this. Their bread is heavy and indigestible because they put no yeast in the dough, and that is why so many persons, particularly men—conclude that the usual concert fare is too heavy and dignified for them, and stay at home.

Shakespeare is frolicsome and facetious, now and then, even in his tragedies. Richard Wagner, in an occasional merry mood, used to astonish his friends by suddenly standing on his head or climbing a tree. I am not advising pianists or singers to indulge in that sort of thing on the stage. Pachmann's pranks verged on foolishness, and they did not particularly redound to his credit. What I wish to emphasize is that there are times and occasions in programs, as in life, when it is desirable to come off the perch. That's not a dignified expression, but slang often expresses a writer's meaning better than the most carefully chosen words. My experience with great men has been that the greater they are the more they are inclined to indulge in slang and puns. I know that John K. Paine and Edward MacDowell were irrepressible punsters. So were Beethoven and Shakespeare.

WHY CHAMBER MUSIC IS NOT POPULAR

The most intellectual, serious and dignified form of the tonal art is chamber music. It is usually played by two violins, a viola and a 'cello, which gives but limited scope for coloring, or for stirring dynamic effects. That being the case, one would think that the composers of chamber music would try to atone for these disadvantages by providing variety in other ways. Instead of doing this, they go to the opposite extreme. Of all dull, dreary, unimaginative, repelling programs those of chamber concerts are the worst. First number: *Quartet in C minor, opus 315*, by Mozart. Second number: *Quartet in B major, opus 49*, by Beethoven. Third number: *Quartet in F sharp minor, opus 719*, by Rachmaninoff—or something like that. Each of the three numbers has four movements: Allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro. Only this and nothing more! It is horribly monotonous, monstrous, asinine. And then musicians wonder why chamber music isn't popular!

Some of the greatest gems in music are in the form of quartets, trios, or sonatas for two instruments. They could be made as popular as other kinds of the best music if they were not thus smothered in pedantry and formalism. The sonata form, instead of being a great achievement in music, has been its deadliest enemy. In innumerable cases it has tempted composers who had good material for a movement or two to spoil everything by add-

ing the other two regulation movements, in which they had nothing more to say. The result was failure; the more so because, invariably, the less a composer has to say the longer it takes him to say it.

A symphony is an orchestral sonata, and there are few symphonies all four movements of which are good. Mrs. Thomas writes, regarding her husband's early days: "To the average concert-goer the word 'symphony' was a synonym for 'bore,' and it repelled rather than attracted an audience." It does so to this day, with few exceptions, so far as the general public is concerned; and these exceptions are the symphonies which are good in every section.

Program music, which has helped so much to make symphonic music popular in the form of symphonic poems, was bitterly opposed for generations as being undignified. It was not till Beethoven endorsed it by writing his *Pastoral Symphony*, with its imitations of bird calls, its scene by the brook, and its thunder storm, that it was accepted as a serious species of music; but to this day some conservatives speak of it disrespectfully.

To come back to chamber music: If the givers of it were not afraid to be considered undignified they would select only the best movement or two of each quartet or trio. Foolish critics, of German training, would accuse them of "mutilating master-works"; but this attitude is ridiculous, because in the vast majority of existing works in sonata (cy-

clic) form there is no organic connection between the movements. They are merely suites.

Never has there been a more ardent and sincere lover of chamber music than the late E. J. De Coppel; a statement which is proved by his spending a fortune to organize and float the admirable Flonzaley quartet. Yet this Mæcenas once told me that two of the usual three quartets on a program were all he cared to hear at one sitting. If this was the case with an enthusiast, how foolish and suicidal is the regulation program of a chamber music concert!

GRAINGER AND KREISLER TO THE RESCUE

The Kneisel Quartet used to put life and go and variety into its programs by playing Percy Grainger's *Molly on the Shore*, to the delight of its audiences. This piece is not dignified, but it is tuneful, sprightly, entrancing—everything that makes music worth while. But the Kneisels played this winsome piece only on the road. For metropolitan audiences it was apparently considered too undignified. A queer world, ladies and gentlemen!

If Grainger were given as prominent a place on programs as Beethoven and Brahms chamber music would be more popular and more people would therefore hear Beethoven and Brahms. See?

Grainger is never boring for one moment. If he ever penned anything tiresome he would cut it out. He doesn't believe in the Teutonic method of "thematic development"—in plain English, padding.

Fritz Kreisler is another very prominent artist who never bores or tires. There is a world of useful suggestion in what a San Francisco manager, Frank W. Healy, said about him the other day, in speaking of him as one of the important factors in *making new concert goers* in that city: "By introducing a certain number of the lighter pieces on his programs he has made friends for music among those who have had neither the training nor the experience to jump into the higher grade of recital programs with understanding and enjoyment. I consider that it is the great artist's duty to make converts for music, and if he can accomplish this by the subtle allurements of the lighter grades of music which are within the comprehension of the man-who-knows-nothing-about-it, what difference does it make so long as the results are satisfactory?"

The short pieces which make Fritz Kreisler's programs so alluring are partly of his own composition, partly chosen from the neglected treasures of the past. His own pieces are gems ranking with the jewels of Chopin and Grieg. They are as inspired and as racy of the Viennese soil as the waltzes of Schubert and Johann Strauss; exquisitely melodious, and appealing to the tenderest emotions. Small and light they are, but so are diamonds compared with huge symphonic boulders. There are professionals and critics who talk as if boulders were more valuable than diamonds, but the public does not think so; and that is why Kreisler always

plays to crowded audiences, usually overflowing on to the stage.

The neglected treasures of the past on Kreisler's programs prove my contention that if concert-givers smashed the dignified and dull sonatas and played only the inspired parts of them, their business would improve tremendously. Many of his treasures are taken from cyclic works of seventeenth and eighteenth century composers. Kreisler is a great scholar. He delves among the dust-covered piles of forgotten music and rescues from them nuggets of gold and precious stones, which he exhibits to the dazzled ears of music-lovers and others *who never knew they were music lovers till they heard him.*

In a way Kreisler is doing for the violinist what Liszt did for the pianist, except that while he chiefly favors the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Liszt preferably exercised his skill in setting jewels by more modern masters. His name is more prominent on pianists' programs than that of any other composer except Chopin, and yet audiences of our day have been familiarized with only a fraction of the Liszt things that would enchant them.

I have in mind particularly his amazingly clever and effective operatic fantasies. Each of these ingeniously—and with interspersed flashes of his own genius—brings together the finest melodies of a whole opera and sets them off with consummate art. Not a few of these operas are now obsolete, but their melodies are as lovely as ever. The public

would love to hear them and the pianists to play them. Why, then, are they not played in public? Because some stupid, pedantic critics cry "undignified." Dignity be hanged! Ladies and gentlemen of the piano, it is your privilege, as well as your pleasure and profit, to revive the Liszt fantasies and transcriptions and defy the class of critics referred to. It is infinitely more important for you to please the public than those dullards. They can't do you any harm if the public is with you.

CHAPTER XXII

MUSICAL REPUTATIONS AND HOW THEY ARE ACHIEVED

A prominent lawyer once said to me that "a professional man usually spends the first ten years of his life trying to get his name into the newspapers—and the rest of his life trying to keep it out of them."

He happened to be a millionaire and did not need any "free advertising." I assured him that professional musicians do not act that way. Most of them are ambitious to get their names not only into "Who's Who," but into as many newspapers as possible; and if they do not succeed, many of them go to the advertising department and pay the privilege of calling public attention to themselves, year after year, to the end of their career.

That *helps* to build up a reputation, and a reputation in music is more important than in most other professions. A teacher who has one does not need to hunt for pupils; they hunt for him. He can make his own terms; his dinner-pail is full every day; and in summer he can travel and rest, at home or abroad. And just as pupils hunt for teachers of established reputation, so **managers**

and clubs pursue famous singers and players, allowing them to practically make their own terms. Surely, the question, "How are reputations achieved?" is all-important from the practical as well as the ideal point of view.

LILLIAN RUSSELL AND MARIANNE BRANDT

The fence around fame has many gates by which it may be approached. The easiest path is that which is paved with beauty. A *succès de beauté* has launched many a young woman, giving her the publicity needed for a favorable start. The most conspicuous case I remember is that of Lillian Russell. When, in the early eighties, she made her first appearance in New York, in "Pinafore" and the "Mascot," the audiences were so dazzled by her beauty of face and form that her rather crude singing and acting—for she was very young—were overlooked. People listened with their eyes, the critics along with the rest of the spectators; and Miss Russell woke up to find herself famous. She soon improved as a singer and as an actress; but to the end of her career she realized the stage value of her beauty, and she contributed articles to the magazines describing the daily exercises and other methods she adopted to preserve it as long as possible.

Yet there have been plenty of singers whose fame exceeded hers but who, like Schumann-Heink, the greatest and most admired contralto of

our time, make no boast of similar personal beauty. The illustrious Marianne Brandt was probably the most homely prima donna that ever trod the operatic stage—yet she took all hearts and minds with her superbly impassioned art. Liszt called her “the German Viardot-Garcia,” and Wagner was so deeply impressed by her art that he invited her to be one of his Bayreuth artists. When attention was called by her to the directions in the text as to Kundry, “a young woman of the greatest beauty,” which, she protested, she could not live up to, he replied: “Never mind the beauty; I need a clever actress and that you are; cosmetics will do the rest.”

Adelina Patti, Emma Calvé, Geraldine Farrar, Lillian Nordica, Emma Eames, Zélie de Lussan, and others, had rare personal beauty to facilitate a successful début; but their vocal and histrionic gifts gradually relegated that to a secondary place.

MISS NOVAES AND PERCY GRAINGER

Two particularly interesting recent instances of how real reputations are won are those of the Brazilian pianist, Guiomar Novaes. (pronounced No-váh-ess), and the Australian pianist-composer, Percy Grainger—two genuine artists, whose appearance has confuted the pessimists who dolefully descant on the alleged dying out of the race of great musicians.

Miss Novaes enjoyed the advantage of being sent by the Government of Brazil to Paris to continue

her studies. That its confidence in her was not misplaced was shown when, at the entrance examination of the Conservatoire, she took first place among 388 contestants from all parts of the world; the members of the jury, among them Debussy, Moszkowski and Fauré, being so impressed by her wonderful playing of Schumann's "Carnival," that they subsequently asked her to repeat it. Did ever a young girl have a brighter feather for her cap than that "encore"?

The war frustrated her projected European tour and she came to the United States. But how was she to make her reputation here, with no money to make herself known by a public recital? Fortunately a Brazilian journalist and Mæcenas, J. C. Rodrigues, supplied the funds, and after two recitals at Aeolian Hall she was one of the most favorably known pianists in the country. She, too, has beauty, of the Portuguese type, but that is, after all, one of her minor assets. She won her reputation by her ability to interpret the great masters as if they themselves were at the piano. With her rare gifts she would have won the same success had she been as plain as Marianne Brandt.

Grieg's enthusiasm for Percy Grainger did more than anything else to make him favorably known at once; his own personality and his electrifying performances did the rest. His genius as a composer came to the assistance of the pianist; his delightful arrangements of English and Irish folksongs made audiences bubble over with joy; and when the dan-

ger seemed nigh that he might be classified as a mere arranger, he astonished his admirers by launching serious orchestral and choral works betraying futuristic tendencies, consummate technical mastery, and delightful originality.

A reputation based on real merit—as in the foregoing instances—is the only kind that has a solid and lasting foundation. If Paderewski's early success had really been due, as his jealous foes declared, to his fiery locks and his dimly lighted recital halls, it would not have outlasted one season. He triumphed because his interpretations revealed the genius of the great composers, as those of no pianist since Rubinstein had done. He made the matinee women so enthusiastic in their comments that even men—American men, *mirabile dictu!*—got the habit of going to his recitals.

PADEREWSKI AND JOSEF HOFMANN

Perhaps the most noteworthy thing about the popular success of Paderewski is that he achieved it without the aid of the least trace of charlatanry. Not once did he stoop to conquer. During a quarter of a century I attended nearly every one of his New York recitals, and in all this time I do not recall a single piece on his programs that was cheaply effective or sensational. He placed his phenomenal technical skill entirely in the service of the best music. Never did he attempt to show off his own skill

either as a player or a composer—indeed, he played his own pieces all too seldom.

It was at his recitals that enthusiastic women began the habit of leaving their seats and crowding as near the stage as possible, demanding encores and extras until the after-recital was almost as long as the program itself. This, to be sure, has been a sensational feature of his recitals, which has done a great deal to “advertise” them. But no one *censured* him for these scenes—except some rivals who would have given anything to see them enacted at their own recitals. They helped to establish Paderewski’s reputation, in a perfectly legitimate way; for he played these additions to his programs in an inspired way partly consequent upon these very exhibitions of frenzied enthusiasm.

Second to Paderewski only is that other Polish pianist, Joseph Hofmann. His career suggests the question as to whether being an infant prodigy helps to achieve an enduring reputation.

As a rule it does not. Time was when the exploiting of juvenile talent or skill was profitable. Audiences marveled on seeing and hearing mere tots on the platform exhibiting a digital dexterity equaling that of expert adults. But that is seldom the case now: people have learned that nearly all these toddlers, though clever with their fingers, do not exhibit the soul of music.

Rubinstein had no use for these infant prodigies, knowing that nearly all of them merely flash across the horizon like shooting stars and then disappear

forever. He realized, however, that a notable exception was Josef Hofmann, whom he consequently accepted as one of his few pupils.

When little Josef first came to New York he was about eleven years old. I went to the Windsor Hotel to see him. While he was sitting on my knee I showed him a large picture in *Harper's Weekly* of Siegfried's fight with the dragon. Looking at me, he asked, "Are there any dragons in America?"

Yet this boy, so juvenile otherwise, played as maturely thirty years ago as he does today. Indeed, there were details in his playing of Chopin's concertos that I doubt if he—or any other pianist—could match today. It was inspiration, it was genius, pure and simple, that taught him to play so divinely. It was through that inspiration, continuously manifested, that he achieved his reputation—a reputation that even his occasional lapses into a blasé indifference have not dimmed.

FRITZ KREISLER AND MAUD POWELL

Some of the greatest musical reputations were by no means achieved rapidly, like Hofmann's. Fritz Kriesler's, for instance. While he is now generally acknowledged to be the "Paderewski of the violin," it took him years to win his place on the summit of the musical Parnassus. Season after season he played in European as well as American halls to small audiences. Doubtless he would have attracted the larger public sooner had he been willing to

make concessions—to indulge, like most fiddlers, in sensational Paganinian tricks of virtuosity. But he never cared for these dazzling displays of ornaments rivalling those of a Donizettian prima donna. He set out to win with simpler and more artistic methods, playing soulful melodies in a soulful way. It often gave me huge pleasure to see how his audiences gradually but steadily grew, until, a few years ago, the largest halls began to be too small, and hundreds of chairs had to be put on the stage for the overflow audiences. His return from the trenches merely accelerated this achievement; it would have come in a year or two, quite without such sensational aid.

Maud Powell was among women violinists what Fritz Kreisler is among the men. The last time I heard her play she seemed to me not only the best of her sex but quite equal to any of the men who wield the bow, excepting Kreisler. She, too, achieved her reputation by setting herself a high ideal and living up to it. The leading orchestral conductors soon vied with one another to secure her co-operation, and her delightful recitals were enjoyed all over the world. She did not lower her standard by making a tour of the globe as soloist of the Sousa Band; for that band is one of the best of its kind, and its audiences call for the best there is, with a liberal admixture of lighter pabulum.

The careers of these two eminent violinists, like those of Ysaye, Wilhelmj, Joachim, and many others, show that, as a rule, it is well that *reputa-*

tions should be accumulative. It is this kind of a reputation that, as a rule, is the most firmly established and lasts longest.

HOW IMPATIENCE RUINS MUSICAL REPUTATIONS

It is largely because young artists usually lack the patience to work for an accumulative reputation that so many fail.

When I began my career as an author I was so fortunate as to have the eminent historian, John Fiske, as my adviser. When I confided to him my disappointment because my books on *Romantic* and *Primitive Love* had not brought me the \$100,000 I had wildly hoped for, he wrote to admonish me that I must be patient and plod on, piling stone on stone, as he had done before he had won.

Among the great singers I have known, Lillian Nordica was preëminent for her perseverance, and patience in overcoming obstacles. Had she been satisfied with the lovely lyric voice of her girlhood she might have enjoyed lasting popularity in the concert halls, in oratorio, and in light, tuneful operas. But she aspired to be a *dramatic* soprano—to sing the great Wagner rôles—the Brünnhildes and Isolde; and she succeeded, with the aid of Anton Seidl and that very clever musician and coach, Romain Symmons, who knew the Wagner scores by heart and went over the parts with the great prima donna over and over again until she knew them by heart. In a talk with me at the time I was

writing my *Success in Music and How It is Won*, she said: "If you work five minutes, you succeed five minutes' worth; if you work five hours, you succeed five hours' worth; plenty have natural voices equal to mine, plenty have talent equal to mine, *but I have worked.*"

THE CHARLATAN AND HIS REPUTATION

Clara Louise Kellogg, the great American prima donna, writes in her interesting *Memoirs*: "To young girls who are contemplating vocal study, I always say that it is mostly a question of what one is willing to give up. If you really are prepared to sacrifice all the fun that your youth is entitled to; to work and to deny yourself; . . . to make music the whole interest of your existence; if you are willing to do all this, you may have your reward."

The trouble is that barely one in a hundred of the girls who aspire to stage honors have the courage or the perseverance to do such work, and make such sacrifices. Most of them practice mechanically, read no books but novels, dodge honest teachers who tell them the truth, and place themselves in the hands of charlatans who promise, for a certain sum, to land them in the big opera houses in a few months.

A parent or child may find it as difficult to distinguish a charlatan from an honest teacher as a poisonous toadstool from an edible mushroom. But any instructor who promises to land a pupil in the

opera house in so short a time must be viewed with suspicion and alarm—alarm because he may actually succeed in thus placing her if she is very beautiful and has a lovely voice; but it is absolutely certain that in such a case the voice will break down under the premature strain; it will not last much longer than the few months of its training. The rest is silence—and tears of anguish.

There are men—and women, too—who have made reputations by thus selling beautiful girls and voices to equally unscrupulous managers. Morally, such teachers are not much above the level of white slavers.

One of the world's greatest teachers, Leschetizky, to whom Americans flocked by the dozens, declared that while often they are willing to work, "their main fault is their extreme hurry." And that is what gives the charlatan his opportunity. He caters to this hurry and finds it profitable—to *himself*. He places the girls, others hear of it, and rush into the trap, *in a hurry*.

SELLING REPUTATIONS

In the case of an honest teacher, as in that of a genuine artist, the reputation must be accumulative. It has been well said, by a prominent editor, that "many teachers do not merchandise their reputations properly when they are once achieved. They are afraid to ask what they should receive. The merchant realizes full well the value of a trade-

mark, and he indeed often sells a trade-mark for a fine figure where there is no exchange whatever of the commodity."

Printer's ink, while a considerable part of the game of getting on in the world, is not the most important part by any means. There is more money wasted in printer's ink and in newspaper and magazine advertising than in anything else. So few teachers and artists understand that it is valueless unless it is used year in and year out and intelligently used. I know of one publisher who has often rejected advertisements because he could not see that they could lead to any ultimate profits. He feels that it is just as good business for him to save a patron from losing his money as it is to help another to make money. Unfortunately this ideal is not preserved in all papers.

It certainly pays to advertise; but unintelligent advertising often gives mere notoriety in place of a real reputation. There is a vast difference between the two; and while it is possible, as Lincoln remarked, to fool all of the people some time or some of the people all the time, you cannot fool all the people all the time.

CHAPTER XXIII

DON'T BE FOOLED BY APPLAUSE

Players and singers attach altogether too much importance to applause as an index of what the public likes and wants to hear. Can I prove this assertion? Easiest thing in the world.

Everybody knows that, next to Caruso, no operatic artist of our time has been so popular and drawn such large audiences as Geraldine Farrar. And Geraldine Farrar's most popular rôle has always been that of the unhappy heroine of *Madame Butterfly*. Whenever she appeared in this opera the Metropolitan was crowded to the ceiling. She could travel and sing this part daily throughout the season to overflowing audiences. The only thing equal to it that I have known is Emma Calvé's vogue in *Carmen*.

SUCCESS WITHOUT APPLAUSE

Have you ever heard and seen Farrar as Chio-Chio-San, the Japanese girl who after some happy days of married life, mourns her faithless American lover and finally commits suicide? If not I am sorry for you. Few things so moving have ever been seen on the stage. Yet I recall few operas in

which there is usually so little applause as after the several acts of *Madame Butterfly*. Nor is New York singular in this matter. In other cities there is the same eager desire to see Farrar as Chio-Chio-San. In Atlanta, for instance, during one visit of the Metropolitan Opera Company *Madama Butterfly* drew the largest audience of the week, although Caruso appeared three times in three of his best parts. Yet read what the correspondent of *Musical America* wrote concerning the *Butterfly* performance.

"The great audience itself was something of a puzzle in its attitude toward the remarkable work of Miss Farrar in her greatest operatic rôle. The audience was moved, deeply moved. Yet it was chary of its applause; and the really magnificent portrayal of Miss Farrar seemed, on the surface, not to receive its meed of approbation. She was given a creditable number of curtain calls; but there was lacking the unmistakable smash and ring of a true ovation, even after the second act, when her acting alone, with never a note sung, should have swayed the audience from its chairs."

"The audience was moved, deeply moved," yet it did not applaud! What does that mean? It means that there are other ways of expressing grateful emotion than clapping the hands together. Geraldine herself told me once that whenever she heard the half-stifled snuffles of emotion during her impersonation of the unhappy Japanese girl-wife,

she knew that she was doing herself and her part justice.

When Richard Wagner produced his *Parsifal* he felt that the semi-religious first and third acts were of a nature that made applause after them almost as much out of place and as annoying as it would be in church. In New York his wishes have always been respected. When, after a few years of no *Parsifal*, owing to the war, this sublime work was restored to the Metropolitan's repertory, not a hand was raised by the crowded audience after those two acts; but after the worldly second act all the pent-up enthusiasm found vent in the usual way.

I remember that my father, who was musically very sensitive, objected to any kind of applause after good music. Once he wrote an article, suggesting, sarcastically, that if there must be applause, it might be furnished by specially constructed machines. That, no doubt, would please the managers and performers alike, as it would be cheaper than a clacque.

AN HONEST CRITIC JUMPED ON

Every day audiences everywhere allow themselves to be fooled by the paid hand-clappers and shouters of "bravos." A certain famous Italian tenor (now, presumably, in a better world) had a bodyguard of half a dozen clacquers, whom he always took along on tour. They were carefully instructed as to where to clap their hands, and usu-

ally the hearers joined them, even when they had not been particularly stirred. And, of course, in the newspapers next day one read that, after this and that number, there were outbursts of applause. So the newspaper readers were fooled, too!

Experienced professional critics cannot be fooled. No matter how adroitly the clacquers are scattered, they betray themselves to trained ears. To a conscientious critic this kind of "personally conducted" applause is annoying as well as embarrassing. If he mentions the "loud, prolonged and frequent applause" which is instigated by the paid professional applauders, he helps to deceive his readers as to the merit and popularity of certain singers who hire clacquers or let their managers do it for them. And if he does not mention it, he is likely to be accused of being prejudiced and not reporting "facts."

The poorest performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony I ever heard was followed by a perfect tornado of applause. The house had been stuffed with friends of the conductor, who thus showed their gratitude for free tickets. Knowing this, I did not consider it my duty to refer to the "enthusiasm" of the audience but simply spoke of the wretched performance. The following day a relative of the conductor wrote to the editor-in-chief of the *Evening Post*, accusing me of being prejudiced, because I had said nothing about the enthusiastic audience, and contrasting me with a certain morning paper's critic who had fully described the audience's demon-

strative applause. I made my chief laugh when I showed him this morning critic's article. Written by an intimate friend of the conductor, it did indeed tell about the noisy audience but did not say one word about the performance! By telling the truth, but not the whole truth, this critic had deliberately misled his readers as to that performance, while I, who gave the right impression, was jumped upon!

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

It has been said that any patent medicine or food, no matter how worthless or even harmful it may be, can be made a success if the firm offering it has \$10,000 to spend in advertising it. By frequent advertising they compel every druggist or grocer to keep their nostrum or cereal in stock—and the thing's done.

A clever manager or agent can similarly boom a mediocre singer or player into unmerited but very profitable prominence. I have seldom been so indignant as I was one evening when a certain singer, who had a diabolically clever manager, was rushed into a sensational success in the making of which the public had as little to do as it has in the choice of a presidential candidate. The first thing the manager did was to create an artificial scarcity of tickets for the début, by giving away most of them to applause deadheads. The rest of them were in the hands of speculators.

WHAT FOOLS THESE MORTALS BE!

Now you know—as well as that diabolically clever manager knew—as Shakespeare knew—what fools these mortals be. As soon as they find the tickets for an entertainment are “all gone,” they open their purse and pay any fancy price asked by speculators. Fabulous sums were paid them on this occasion, and the story about these, nicely garnished of course, got into the papers all over the country. Can you imagine a more magnificent advertisement?

On the evening of the performance there was a carefully planned artificial “mob scene” at the entrance of the theater—a crowd struggling frantically to all appearances, for places in the standing room. That got into the papers too, as a matter of course, and so did the fact that after this singer had sung her first number (very badly) the audience applauded like a barrelful of lunatics. After the first curtain, the applause became a riot of enthusiasm. Several musical persons came to ask me to ask “What does it mean? She sings badly.” “Mean?” I answered. “It means she has a diabolically clever manager—two in fact.”

After all, no great harm is done by such exploits, although one hates to see mediocrity triumph in such fashion while real merit remains unrecognized and unrewarded. But there are ways in which misleading applause is responsible for much mischief and many tragedies—blasted lives and

misery untold. I refer to the girls and boys who leave their home towns to study music, buoyed up by false hopes inspired by the applause of foolish or ignorant friends.

Rafael Joseffy was not only one of the greatest pianists of his day, but he was noted for his wit and sarcasm. To the pupils in his class at the National Conservatory he used to say, with a sly twinkle in his eyes: "I am the best pianist in Tarrytown." After he had moved to New York my wife, who was in his class, said to him: "So you are no longer the greatest pianist in Tarrytown?" Quick as a flash came his answer: "No, but I am one of the best in Seventeenth Street!"

Hundreds—nay, thousands—of the music students who come to New York might lead happy lives if they were content to be "the greatest pianist" or singer in their home town. They leave it, fooled by the applause and flattery of friends, and soon their dream of a world success becomes a nightmare of disappointment and dismay.

Of course, it is useless to warn these young folks. Each of them thinks he or she is an exception. They do not realize that Schopenhauer was right when he wrote that "the common crowd usually includes one more than every one imagines." But as the editor of the *Etude* has said: *Un asino sempre trova un altr'asino che la amira*—in English, "an ass always finds another ass who admires him."

My chief object, however, in writing this article

is not to expose sham successes on the stage, or to warn young players and singers to take the applause of friends with a grain of chloride of sodium, but to help singers improve their recitals. *They need a whole lot of improving.*

Song recitals are not what they used to be. In the preface to my *Songs and Song Writers*, the first edition of which appeared in 1900, I wrote joyously about the increasing number of song recitals and the fact that the vocalists had begun to sing real "art songs" instead of the elaborate operatic or concert arias that used to be deemed necessary. At that time Lehmann, Nordica, Sembrich, Schumann-Heink and other great ones were delighting us with the mastersongs of the great composers.

MORE RECITALS THAN EVER

Today there are more song recitals than ever, but I seldom write joyously about them. The singers have discarded not only operatic and concert arias but the mastersongs too. Anything more thrashy than the average recital program of the day I cannot imagine. More than once in my writings I have compared the realm of song to a brookbed in which there are thousands of pebbles and dozens of large diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires. The precious stones are as free to all as the pebbles, but the singers studiously ignore them. The one thing they think of is applause for themselves. To quote once more the historian Ambrose:

"Concert singers hunt through the volumes of songs seeking for those ending with loud high notes which, like the old Roman *vos plaudite*, are an appeal for applause."

Another famous critic, Dr. Hanslick, made fun of these final loud high notes by declaring that they provoke hand-clapping as inevitably as the application of an onion to the eyes provokes tears. Of course, it is ever so much easier to provoke "tears" this way than by singing artistically and emotionally, and that is why most singers make thrashy programs.

They make a huge mistake in supposing that the applause following explosive final notes will ensure them large audiences in the future. The artists who are sure of big audiences usually are, on the contrary, singers and players who avoid clap-trap of that sort. These artists get the approval of high-class musicians, without which no great reputation is made. Jean de Reszke, the most famous and popular tenor of his time, used to amuse his friends—myself included—by lying on his back in his room and roaring out a high C. In public he avoided that "onion" effect "because," as he once said to me, "if I begin that sort of thing, I shall always be expected to indulge in it. I prefer to make my successes in more artistic ways."

APPLAUSE FOR SCHUMANN AND MACDOWELL

Don't be fooled by the applause following a cheap but effective song, into believing that the audience prefers that song to better things. It was written with the special object of securing applause, and therefore gets it; but the audience may be sufficiently refined to enjoy better things much more, even though they do not provoke so much applause. It all depends on how these better songs are done. At a New York recital given by the fascinating Greek-Brazilian soprano, Vera Janacopulos, there was much applause for some of the inferior numbers on the program, yet it was mere patter compared with the outburst of enthusiasm which followed a splendidly emotional rendering of Schumann's mastersong *Ich grolle nicht*.

Lucy Gates, whose lovely voice gives me more pleasure than that of any other living soprano excepting, perhaps, Rosa Raisa, told me her experience with the songs of Edward MacDowell on her concert tour. She had noticed that only the lighter and somewhat superficial songs of our foremost American composer usually were sure of abundant applause. But she did not let this applause fool her. She felt sure that the greater songs of MacDowell would be even more applauded if they were sung in a way which fully revealed their subtle musical, poetic and emotional qualities. She put her whole mind and artistic experience to this task, and the result was that in most towns these deeper

songs of MacDowell got more applause than anything else she had on her programs.

If other singers followed her splendid example, how our recital programs would suffer a sea change into something rich and strange! No longer cheap pebbles for the daily pabulum of audiences—but diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires! Let us pray for the conversion and improvement of these singers.

CHAPTER XXIV

SHOULD MUSICAL CRITICS BE ABOLISHED?

Should musical critics be abolished? Dear me! What would the artists and the would-be artists do without us? Are you aware that nine out of every ten concerts in New York City are given, not only without the least expectation of profit, but with absolute certainty of several hundred dollars' loss? Why then are they given? Because the poor things who sing and play, always hope and believe that the critics will write flattering notices about them which can be reprinted in circulars and used to pave the way in other cities and towns in which there is not such a glut of music as in the metropolis.

The "poor things," I say, because most of them are doomed to disappointment. In a city where there are sometimes as many as nine or ten concerts and recitals in one day it is impossible for the critics to hear them all, or half of them; and if they heard even half of them they would soon be vegetating or maniacally raving in lunatic asylums.

Instead of wanting to abolish musical critics, the performers should only hope and pray for more of them. Every Metropolitan paper has a musical editor, and, usually, one (scantily) paid assistant.

Seldom have the musical editors time to attend the recitals of debutants because more important things at the opera or at orchestral concerts call for their attention. Hence the assistant takes care of the minor affairs, so that, even if the recital is covered, and favorably, it is not possible to use the name of the chief critic in reprinting the encomium.

Singular ideas regarding the functions and duties of newspapers prevail among incipient musicians. They think that if they have spent some thousands of dollars on their education and put an advertisement into a paper, they are entitled to the services of a famous musical critic for an hour or two, and a quarter of a column of space in a newspaper which often has to condense to a minimum the most important news matter, and even to refuse columns of profitable advertising because space is so limited.

HOEING DOWN THE WEEDS

One cannot but feel sorry for the hopeful, and sometimes talented, young musicians whose plans have thus gone a-gley. But misery loves company; so I always tell those who unbosom their grief to me that the literary editors of the newspapers also can comment on only a small proportion of the books sent for review; and that, when Richard Watson Gilder was editor of the *Century Magazine*, he once told me that he could not possibly print more than two out of every hundred unsolicited manuscripts offered to him.

So the writers are worse off than the musicians.

If an art critic goes to an exhibition of new pictures—hundreds of them sometimes—he does not consider it his duty to cover all of them. If he did, his article would be so long—or so dry—that nobody would read it.

If I printed all the advance “reading notices” that musicians or their agents send me, I would need a whole page of the *Evening Post* every Saturday, and few would read it, for it would be mostly about mediocrities and nobodies in whom no one is interested. No newspaper could do such things and live. Self preservation is the first law of nature.

The late William Foster Apthorp, who, in his day, was the leading musical critic in Boston, was a kind-hearted man, but he refused to coddle young musicians simply because they had worked hard to win success. He judged them entirely by the results of their efforts. “Success,” he wrote, “should be to the strong alone; and they, thank heaven! can win it for themselves. And it is for the strong man to prove himself strong; it is nobody else’s business. I would have all critics who have encouraged the weakling of art . . . indicted for compounding a public nuisance.”

He was right; but there is another side to the question. The catalogs of flower seeds caution you that if you raise petunias you should save the weaker plants, because those usually yield the finest flowers. But they need extra care and must be

protected from throttling weeds; and this suggests another reason why musical critics should not be abolished. They are needed as *weeder*s.

Have you ever had a garden of your own? If so, you have found out to your dismay how the weeds crowd out and kill the flowers unless they are persistently hoed down. If the musical critics did not forever mow and hoe and plow down the multitudinous mediocrities in our concert halls and opera houses, the best musical petunias would seldom live to unfold their superb blossoms.

"Mediocre music-making is a sin against art," Liszt once wrote to Theodore Thomas. As more than nine-tenths of all music-making is mediocre, or worse, what a sinful world this is for the musical critics to redeem!

PERSECUTING GENIUS

While most critics are ready to do their share of the hoeing, too many of them are careless, hoeing down the flowers, too, and not a few of them actually favor the weeds. Birds of a feather flock together. Mediocrity loves mediocrity and hates genius.

Once upon a time I planned to write a comic history of music. It would have been concerned largely with the ludicrous mistakes of critics—many of them famous—in writing about composers of genius. Moritz Hauptmann wrote that he did not believe a single one of Wagner's operas would survive him. That was in 1847. Ten years later

the New York *Times* critic made the wonderful discovery that *Lohengrin* "does not contain a dozen bars of melody"! Another critic, when Gounod's *Faust* had its first performance in New York, declared there was only one real melody in it!

A big book could be filled with grotesque criticisms like these about every great composer or artist that ever lived.

David Bispham, in his memoirs, *A Quaker Singer's Recollections*, says: "It is extraordinary how generally musical reviewers attempt to impede rather than to assist artists in their work, and to destroy rather than uphold well-established reputations. It is so easy to speak in dispraise of anything that, in order that the public may be better instructed regarding those who entertain them, I heartily recommend to all who criticise, what Swinburne calls 'the noble art of praising.' "

Theodore Thomas, who gave his whole life, for scant pay, to the object of educating the American public, was often treated by critics as if he had been a pirate or a Hun. His wife relates that he was all his life keenly sensitive to unfriendly or even unintelligent press criticism, and to read an antagonistic or indifferent notice of one of his concerts would depress his spirits for twenty-four hours afterwards.

"I do think," he once said, "that public criticism of an artist's work should be made, at least, in a friendly spirit; then it would not be so discouraging and have such a paralyzing effect on the mind."

THE NOBLE ART OF PRAISING

When I became a musical critic in 1881, at the green age of twenty-seven, I undertook, as most young critics do, to lay down the law for artists who knew a hundred times as much as I did. I soon got over that silly attitude, having become convinced that the only important function of criticism is to discover and boom genius or superior merit. And today, after forty years of experience in one of the three busiest musical cities in the world, I more than ever share the opinion of Saint-Saëns and Théophile Gautier that composers, players and singers should be judged by their *best* achievements. Today, when I come across a real genius, creative or interpretative, like Percy Grainger, John Powell, Guiomar Novaes, or Lucy Gates, I proclaim my opinion in superlatives of enthusiasm and cling to it with bulldog tenacity till the whole musical public shares it.

This "noble art of praising" is the chief delight of my life. I only wish I could praise all artists the same way. What fun it would be then to be a musical critic!

When Rosa Raisa first sang *Norma* in New York some of the critics wasted most of their space in dwelling on the holes and flaws in her singing. I saw those holes and flaws as well as they did, but they seemed to me too insignificant to be mentioned in comparison with the exquisite beauty of her art and the enrapturing eloquence with which she pro-

claimed her part. It was the most thrilling singing I had heard in a decade.

"What is a critic?" a boy asked his father. "A critic," was the answer, "is a man who writes about things he doesn't like."

If you accept that definition, I cheerfully admit that I am no critic. I often go to recitals at which the playing or singing is so bad or mediocre that I prefer not to comment on it at all. What's the use of wasting time and space on nobodies? I am not naturally cruel, like some of my colleagues, who enjoy pulling out the feathers of song birds.

When my book on *Grieg and His Works* was published, some of the reviewers declared me uncritical, inasmuch as I dwelt on the best of his songs and other works. But there was so much to be said in praise of these that there really was no room to write about the less good ones in the three hundred pages at my command.

In the preface to the second edition I said: "If I am to be called uncritical because of my abounding enthusiasm for the best products of Grieg's genius, uncritical let me be called. The older I get the more I am convinced that the alleged critical faculty of our times is a mental disease, a species of phylloxera threatening the best works of genius. Let us enjoy the fresh grapes from which the harmless wine of musical intoxication is made, leaving the raisins to the analysts and 'critical' commentators."

In a footnote I added: "Once more I beg the

reader to remember that the object of this volume is not to comment on all of Grieg's short pieces and songs but to dwell only on the best of them and do missionary work for these. I am glad I am not like those of my colleagues who apparently find so much more pleasure in gloating over blemishes, real or imaginary, than in calling attention to hidden treasures of genius."

LOWEST FUNCTION OF CRITICISM

A quarter of a century ago the leading literary reviews of Europe and America constantly printed what are colloquially known as "slashing" criticisms of new books—rude, brutal attacks, no more excusable in a civilized community than it would have been for the reviewer, on meeting the author on the sidewalk, to slap his face or kick him into the gutter.

In high-class literary quarters such boorishness is no longer tolerated. Nor is it met with in art criticisms printed in reputable periodicals. But the musical critics of leading newspapers are still allowed to act like wolves, hyenas and harpies, sparing neither the dead nor the living. It is a curious phenomenon, which makes one doubt whether music really hath charms to soothe the savage breast.

It must be admitted that there are provocations to rudeness. It is a great bore and often a torture to have to listen day after day, night after night, to fiddlers who scratch, pianists who bang and

vocalists who sing out of tune. The merciless severity for which New York critics, in particular, are notorious, may have its uses in somewhat diminishing the number of ambitious mediocrities who inflict their crude performance on the public; but on the whole the sledge-hammer style of criticising does much more harm than good.

The knowledge that the New York critics are the most unmerciful in the world prevents most young artists on their first appearance here from doing themselves justice. Some of them are worthy of encouragement; they have spent years in hard work and thousands of dollars for instruction and should at least be given a fair chance.

But it is not only the beginners that are prevented by fear of the carping critics from doing their best. Paderewski probably was not heard at his best in Berlin because he knew that the critics were hostile to him. An appreciative, indulgent audience will stimulate a musician to his best efforts, whereas a cold, unresponsive, overcritical audience will paralyze his best efforts. Frost is contagious.

Theodore Thomas is quoted as saying that a stupid, unsympathetic audience will kill a whole orchestra in five minutes. An excessively critical one is even worse. Some of the leading opera singers have assured me that on first nights they are often prevented from doing their best by the knowledge that certain critics were in the house eagerly listening for all the flaws that might occur in course of the evening—flaws, some of them imaginary, on

which they would dwell in next day's papers, though the merits of the performance (of which nothing would be said) outweighed them twenty times.

It is queer that so many musical critics persist in the delusion that they show their superiority by enumerating imperfections. It is the lowest function of criticism to point these out; anybody can do it. The highest function of criticism is to help along great artists and works of genius by dwelling on their merits and ignoring flaws so long as the merits of the music or the musician make for good on the whole. Where they do not, severity is in place; but rudeness is never excusable. I do not find myself able to praise the doings of the Damrosch brothers, for example, yet I am never rude in my comments.

Think, on the other hand, how horribly rude some of our critics have been toward Calvé, Schumann-Heink, Eames, Nordica, Farrar, Lilli Lehmann, Seidl, Thomas, Mahler, Jean and Edouard de Reszke and others of the world's greatest artists. Jean de Reszke once patted me on the back with the words, "*Voila mon protecteur!*"

Imagine the greatest operatic tenor the world has ever heard needing a protector!

If I were asked what I am most proud of in looking back on my forty years' career, I would answer "My having always stood up as protector of the greatest artists and composers."

GRIEG AND THE GERMANS

The composers I have particularly enthused over are Bach, Schubert, Chopin, Wagner, Liszt, Grieg, Franz, Tchaikovsky, Johann Strauss, Massenet, MacDowell. There are others just as good, but forty years ago, when I began my critical career, most of the men just named still needed "protectors" to brain brainless critics. To Wagner, Grieg, and Massenet I have devoted whole volumes; to Liszt I have given a large share of my book on Richard Strauss (whom I do not like); Chopin heads the list of essays in my first musical book; Schubert and Franz are discussed at great length in my *Songs and Song Writers*; and to MacDowell I expect to give a volume of reminiscences some day; he, America's foremost composer, was one of my most intimate friends; the appreciation of his music is growing fast not only in this country but abroad. One of the leading German publishers, Schotts Söhne, say in a recent catalogue that his compositions are on the way to becoming the most played of all piano pieces—which is surely a feather in the cap of American music.

The Germans are not always so hospitable to composers from other countries. They have a way of belittling them. Let me cite a few instances from my book on Grieg.

One day the composer Bargiel (now forgotten), asked a pupil what she had brought with her. "A piece by Grieg," she replied. "But, my dear girl,"

exclaimed Bargiel, "Grieg is no music!" The girl was a Norwegian, and this was more than she could endure. "What!" she cried, "Grieg no music? Adieu, Herr Professor!" And with that she swept from the room like an offended goddess.

This supercilious attitude of professional pedants was widespread in Germany, coupled with a general, belittling contempt for "mere foreigners." An amusing illustration of it was provided in an article on Grieg in *Die Musik*. The writer of it, a well-known pedagogue, declared that Grieg, "while not a genius," is "fresher and has more substance" than Chopin, and resembles Tschaikovsky, who is at present "very much overrated." There you are! Three of the greatest non-German composers smitten at once with the jawbone of a—piano teacher!

Grieg was so used to being belittled in Germany that once, when I called his attention to the praise bestowed on him by the enlightened Dr. Hugo Riemann, in his admirable *Geschichte der Musik seit Beethoven*, he wrote to me, under date of January 16, 1903: "Riemann's *Musikgeschichte* I have not read. It cannot possibly be true that I am praised in it! It reminds me of old man Hauptmann, in Leipzig, who, many, many years ago, on hearing the *Meistersinger Vorspiel*, exclaimed at one place: 'Stop! that must be wrong, for it sounds correct!'"

After Grieg's death a Munich journalist wrote that "the vicious criticisms were always in his mind, and when I called on him, a few hours before his concert began, he had many bitter things to say

about German critics. He also intimated that it was because of them that he avoided Germany for so many years when he was on his concert tours."

In other words, many thousands of Germans had these critics to thank for losing the opportunity to hear one of the greatest composers of the nineteenth century interpreting his uniquely fascinating piano pieces as he alone could play them.

And all this time the German public was wildly enthusiastic about his music. Read this from a letter to his friend Beyer, written in Berlin a few months before his death: "After the concert Mr. Weingartner entered and I was glad to meet him. Then came whole families, a mother with two sons, who, with tears in their eyes, told me about the happiness my music had brought into their home and that I could have no idea what I had done for them through many years. What was I to say? Tears were coming in my eyes, too."

This striking illustration of the persecution of genius by professional critics and the harm done by them I could multiply by dozens of other pathetic cases. Is it a wonder that Richard Wagner suggested that newspaper critics should be abolished? They certainly did infinitely more to hamper than to help *his* work. When I begged him, in 1876, to allow me to attend the Nibelung rehearsals at the first Bayreuth Festival, he at first answered, gruffly, that he had no use for journalists; and it was only after I had explained that I was too young to be a critic, that I simply had come to describe

what I saw and heard, that he relented and gave me permission to attend.

MASSENET A GREAT GENIUS

Massenet is another original and truly inspired composer whom it has been the critical fashion to belittle and for whom therefore I took up the cudgels. His death gave to musical philistines and professionals a rare chance to air their lack of understanding as to what constitutes musical genius. One of them, in a London magazine, echoes the opinion expressed in "Grove's Dictionary of Music" by a biographer of Brahms: "Massenet's prolonged and widespread success is one of the puzzling phenomena of modern musical history. While those who look a little below the surface find his music inexpressibly monotonous, casual hearers are surprised by his superficial versatility. . . . Few of the real lovers of music will expect any of his works to remain among the compositions that keep their popularity after the death of the author."

To those who *really* look below the surface, the prolonged and widespread popularity of Massenet's music is no mystery whatever. It is owing to his having had the divine gift of creating original and impassioned melodies. This gift alone insures genuine and lasting success in the world of music. Undoubtedly, Massenet wrote many pages of dull, monotonous, uninspired music—almost as many as Brahms wrote—but his most melodious creations

will outlive by decades the majority of Brahms's works.

Lucid, melodious counterpoint may seem less deep than the intricate, muddled counterpoint of the scholarly composers who have not the faculty of creating melodies, but in truth it is of a much higher type. Richard Strauss's counterpoint, for instance, is much more obtrusively learned and intricate than Massenet's, but, being unmelodious, the operas in which he has exemplified it are already moribund, whereas Massenet's are more popular than ever, though some of them are several decades old. Judging the future by the past, therefore "the real lovers of music" will expect his operas to remain among the compositions that "keep their popularity after the death of the author."

Those who look *farthest* below the surface are astonished and delighted with the subtle art displayed by Massenet in the best of his operas, notably the *Juggler of Notre Dame*. He was for many years professor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire (where he taught a number of young men who subsequently became famous—among them Charpentier, Pierné, Bruneau, Leroux, Vidal, Savard), and he thoroughly knew all the tricks of harmonization and orchestration; but, unlike most musicians (especially those of the Brahms type) he also understood the art of concealing art. Like Wagner, whom he adored, he was able to make counterpoint so melodious that the public enjoyed it, while the critical pharisees had not sufficient

acumen to see this delicious detail-work in their vain attempts to "look below the surface."

The French adore Massenet—he is their favorite opera composer—because they know how to interpret and appreciate his melodic and harmonic subtleties. I must confess that while I always liked his *Manon*, I did not fully realize its inspired depth until Giorgio Polacco's reading of the score made the esthetic shivers electrify my spine. Oddly enough when this same master-conductor presided over my favorite among the Massenet operas—*The Juggler*—I thought I was getting tired of it. The reason was that he *read the score at sight!* The following year, after he had mastered its subtleties, he thrilled me with it, as Campanini used to do.

WHEN DOCTORS DISAGREE

There are not a few who think that musical critics are entirely superfluous, for do they not constantly disagree and contradict each other? Why not abolish them altogether? Which of them shall we believe?

The answer to this is that there are critics and critics. Some are competent and honest, others are incompetent or swayed by various motives that have nothing to do with art. The public usually discovers which of them can be relied on.

One paradox must be borne in mind. Two critics may give diametrically opposite estimates of a singer or player and yet both may be right! How's

that? Well, as you know, not a few artists are apt to be nervous, or need thawing out when they appear in public before they can do themselves justice. A critic who hears the first group of songs only (often there isn't time for more) may therefore express keen disappointment, while another, who hears the later groups only, may depart wildly enthusiastic.

CHAPTER XXV

EARNINGS AND BUSINESS METHODS OF GREAT COMPOSERS

There seems to be a general impression that the musicians of the past were very poor men. This has not been invariably the case; not a few, indeed, were quite well-to-do. The editor of the *Etude* asked me to write an article about some of these, and the business ability of great musicians of the past and present. It's a good subject, yielding interesting facts and biographic gossip; also a few incidental lessons.

While he had his ups and downs and was bankrupt repeatedly, Handel must be classed with the great composers who prospered. As a youth he had, or made, plenty of money to travel in Italy and learn how to compose operas, and in London, which was his home during the last forty-nine years of his life, he earned sums of money which made him a very rich man compared with his great colleague, Bach, whose widow died in a poorhouse. To begin with, Queen Anne granted him, in 1713 (when he was twenty-eight years old) a pension of £200 a year, which had, of course, several times the purchasing power of \$1,000 today; and to this was added later by the Elector of Hanover, the new King of England, an additional £200.

He coined money, too, by writing opera after opera for the Royal Academy of Music, fourteen of them altogether. When this company failed, losing £50,000, Handel had enough in his pocket to be able to risk a company of his own and write more operas; but after four years of varying fortunes, this also failed, and he found himself the poorer to the tune of £10,000. Imagine Bach, or any other composer in Germany, losing \$50,000! Handel had been able to earn and lose it, by becoming a British subject and appealing to the taste of the English public.

His oratorios, which are as English as English can be, became even more popular than his operas had been. Prosperity returned and enabled him to follow his generous impulses. During the last nine years of his life, he gave every year at least one performance of the *Messiah* for the special benefit of the Foundling Hospital, the receipts averaging \$2,500 a performance. The trustees of the hospital tried to get Parliament to grant them the sole right to perform that oratorio; but this was too much for the irascible Handel.

"The Devil!" he exclaimed, "For what shall the Foundlings put mine oratorio in the Parliament? The Devil! Mine Musick shall not go to the Parliament!"

BEETHOVEN AND MONEY

Undoubtedly, if being absent-minded and acting like a big child are hall marks of genius, Beethoven

was a genius. For various reasons, he was always changing his residence, and at one time he was paying rent for three lodging places at once; which didn't help to make him rich.

As a youth Ludwig had made his living by giving piano lessons. His father was a minor musician with a very small income, most of which he spent for drink. In Vienna Beethoven continued his piano lessons, most of them in aristocratic and wealthy families. In spite of his eccentricities and rude ways, he became a great favorite with members of the nobility. Prince Lobkowitz, Archduke Rodolph and Prince Kinsky together provided him with an income of \$2,000 a year; to this Prince Lichnowsky added another 600 florins, besides providing him with free lodgings; so that, altogether, the great man ought to have been able to get along very well, quite apart from his earnings as a composer.

These were considerable. The publishers soon found him out and competed with one another for his works. In 1800, when he was only thirty years old, and had not yet written any of his greatest works (his genius being slow in maturing), he wrote to Dr. Wegeler: "My compositions are bringing in a goodly sum, and, I may add, it is scarcely possible for me to execute the orders given. Also, for every work I have six or seven publishers and if I choose, even more. They do not bargain with me; I demand and they pay. You see how pleasant it is. For example, I see a friend in dis-

tress, and if my purse does not allow of my helping him, I have only to sit down and write, and in a short time he is relieved."

That last sentence helps to explain why Beethoven, with all his opportunities, did not get rich. His interest in his spendthrift nephew provides another reason.

By 1805 he had become quite peremptory in his demands, writing to Breitkopf and Härtel: "The delay in the publishing of my works has often been most prejudicial to my business relations as author; it is therefore my firm resolve in the future to fix such periods, and stick to them."

To Seyfried he once remarked that he wished he could have just one publisher, who would pay him a fixed sum a year for all his output. This, he thought, had been Goethe's arrangement with Cotta, and Handel's with a London publisher. On another occasion he declared that there ought to be some sort of exchange building (*Magazin der Kunst*) to which a composer could take his manuscripts and "take what pay he needed."

"I am no business man," he declares in a letter to the Leipzig publisher, C. F. Peters, dated 1822; yet in the same letter, he offers his *Mass* for 100 florins, a pianoforte sonata for 40 ducats, a quartet for 50 ducats, and so on; then he adds: "Nearer to my heart than all these things is the edition of my complete works, which, while still alive I should like to see to. I have really had many offers, but there were obstacles which I could scarcely overcome."

He offers to contribute new works to the list; "and for the whole I should want ten thousand gulden."

MENDELSSOHN, MEYERBEER AND RUBINSTEIN

If Beethoven and Handel had been of the Hebrew persuasion they would probably have been still more prosperous. Neither Mendelssohn nor Meyerbeer, to be sure, needed any shrewd business sense, for the kind of music they wrote made such an instantaneous appeal to the masses, including the rich as well as the poor, that that was sufficient to insure their prosperity.

Mendelssohn's parents were so wealthy that they could afford to live in Berlin in a princely mansion with a large music room for the entertainment of celebrities. At no time in his life did he feel the pinch of poverty, and there was no need of bargaining with publishers in the case of one so popular. He could have whatever he asked for.

Haydn attributed his development as a composer largely to the opportunities he had as leader of Prince Esterhazy's orchestra, to try over his new pieces and make the necessary changes. Mendelssohn needed no prince to help him. He was, as Sir Herbert Parry has noted, the first great composer who came of a rich family, and from the time he was a mere boy he had opportunity in his father's large music room, to conduct his own works.

A further advantage, which only a rich or very

successful composer can enjoy, lay in this, that he could make changes in his music even after it had been printed. Parry relates that Mendelssohn altered and rewrote so much of his *Lobgesang* after the experience he had gained at its first performances at Gutenberg and Birmingham, that the plates which had been engraved for the publication of the work in England had to be destroyed and the entire work re-done. In the case of his D minor trio for piano, violin and 'cello also, as Hiller relates, he went on correcting and altering up to the last minute, and many of the plates had to be engraved over again.

Poor Bach had to engrave some of his best works with his own hands, and the sales were so small that they didn't pay for the metal used.

Concerning Meyerbeer, it is sufficient to know that his *Robert le Diable* not only made his own fortune, but that of the Paris Grand Opera; and that its success was even surpassed by that of his masterwork, *Les Huguenots*, which yielded 300,000 francs in forty performances. It was the enormous success of Meyerbeer that induced Wagner to try Paris when he was at work on *Rienzi*.

Of Rubinstein's songs and piano pieces, many had large sales, which helped to enrich him. But his chief source of income was, of course, his piano playing. In America alone, he earned, in 1872-73, \$40,000; but the task of giving 215 recitals proved so irksome that he declined a subsequent offer of \$125,000 for fifty more concerts in America.

PADEREWSKI AND LISZT

Paderewski earned over \$200,000 in more than one of his American tours. Before the war began, he was a millionaire, owning one of the finest hotels as well as large estates in Poland, a chateau in Switzerland, and other valuable property. In Chicago he once took in \$7,000 at a single recital. His compositions have not been as remunerative as they will be when they are better known.

Liszt, too, did not derive his wealth from the sale of his compositions. It's different now; every pianist, public or private, plays his pieces; but in his own day the attitude was such that he often said, "I can wait." He could have been the richest musician that ever lived, had he not given up playing the piano thirty-nine years before his death, because he preferred composing, conducting and teaching (for nothing per hour!). He always lived in comfort, but most of the money that came to him, he gave to Wagner and to other musicians who needed help.

WAGNER'S FORTUNE

Should Wagner be classed among the rich or the needy composers? Both! During the three years he spent in Paris he was so poor that his wife had to pawn her last jewels, and even to beg on the street. During the twelve years of exile from Germany he constantly borrowed or begged money

from Liszt, and other friends, because, as in his Paris days, every effort to make a living failed. While he was at work on *Tristan* there was a day when he had to pawn his watch and his golden snuff-box, a Ducal present. He wondered why he shouldn't have a pension of, say \$1,500 to \$2,000 a year, such as others had had, including Mendelssohn, who did not need one. This was at the age of forty-six.

It was partly his own fault that the royalties from his operas always remained small, for he had a way, when in immediate need of money, of selling his rights for a mess of pottage. Had he been a better business man, he would not have been obliged so often to borrow money.

From the publishers he did not get much. In 1843 the leading German publishers, Breitkopf and Härtel, were inclined to print his *Flying Dutchman*; but when he wanted a modest honorarium, they dropped it. Some years later he sold, to the same firm, the publishing rights to *Lohengrin*, for 224 Reichstaler, which he owed on the purchase of a piano! If he had received 224,000 Reichstaler, he would not have been overpaid, in view of the millions this opera afterwards brought the publishers, managers, singers and players.

Ten years after his death, Vienna alone was paying his heirs about \$4,000 a year in royalties from his operas. As Liszt once wrote to Wagner concerning a famous actor: "Dawison told me the other day that his recent series of performances in

Berlin paid for the purchase of a villa near Dresden. At this rate, *you* ought to be able to buy, with your scores, all Zurich, besides the seven Churfürsten and the lake!"

At the time when I wrote my Wagner biography, I figured out roughly that Wagner's heirs must be getting at least \$50,000 a year on royalties from his operas.

Of the seventeen or more volumes of letters by Wagner that have been printed, none are more interesting than the two which contain the correspondence with his publishers. In the first of these, we discover that Breitkopf and Härtel were amazed at his demand of \$7,500 for the publishing rights of the four Nibelung operas: *Rheingold*, *Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*, and even balked at half that sum! Ultimately these valuable scores went to Schott.

For *Tristan and Isolde* Breitkopf and Härtel paid Wagner the equivalent of \$800. That wasn't much, and it probably would have been less if they could have known that seven years would elapse before this opera (considered at that time "impossible") would be staged.

Now and then Wagner had a windfall, as when he was invited to St. Petersburg, where he was paid a princely sum for some concerts. This sum he "blew in" in Vienna—and why not?

To Praeger he once wrote: "By nature I am luxurious, prodigal and extravagant, much more than Sardanapalus and all the old emperors to-

gether." To Frau Wille he said: "Is it really such an outrageous demand if I claim a right to the little bit of luxury which I like—I who am preparing enjoyment for the world and for thousands?"

Millions, he should have said.

During the last two decades of his life he was able to indulge in these luxuries without running into debt, thanks chiefly to the admiration and friendship of King Ludwig II of Bavaria, who placed at his disposal the means for enjoying life in a material way.

VERDI, MASSENET AND GRIEG

Verdi was born the same year as Wagner, but very different was his career. To be sure, he had his ups and downs, and more of his operas failed than succeeded; thirty there were, and only eight have survived. In Italy, however, the failure of an opera does not necessarily impoverish a composer; Mascagni and Leoncavallo have grown fat on their failures, backed by one huge success in each case.

At the age of twenty-three Verdi had the good luck to win the love of a girl who was not only worth having on her own account, but because of her wealthy father, on whom the young composer could count for help in time of need. Gradually his fame grew, and with it his own fortune. For his masterwork, *Aida*, he received \$20,000, with an offer of \$10,000 more if he would go to Cairo and

supervise its first performances; and to this were, of course, added royalties from all countries, amounting in all to many hundreds of thousands. He made good use of his fortune in various benevolent ways, and at his death he bequeathed a large sum to found a Home for Aged Musicians in Milan.

Probably Verdi earned more money than his predecessor, Rossini, who stopped writing operas thirty-nine years before his death because he felt lazy and had all the money he wanted.

In France, probably the wealthiest composer was Massenet. When I wrote my book on him I asked him for details regarding his comparative profits from various operas, but he replied that he couldn't give me them as he had not kept account of them. As a youth he had to beat kettle-drums in a theatre for a living. To this day his operas lead all others in the repertory of French opera houses, and that means big royalties.

Let me conclude with Grieg, another composer whose life I had the privilege of writing with his own assistance. While never really wealthy, he must be classed with the prosperous composers. The Scandinavian countries believe in genius, and they aid it. Denmark gave Gade a pension, while Norway aided Svendsen and Grieg. What Grieg got was only 1,600 crowns a year, but that was equal to more than as many dollars today. His compositions brought him in a handsome sum yearly, and when I visited him, in July, 1901, he lived

with his wife in an elegant villa overlooking the picturesque fjord. He left \$65,000 at his death. This was not quite so much as Brahms, who left about \$80,000 to his heirs. Grieg's minimum demand for appearing at a concert was \$250; once he refused, because of ill health, a London offer of \$750 for one concert.

Enough has now been said to show that a considerable number of composers were able to enjoy all the comforts of life. The list might be further enlarged, especially by including Offenbach, Lecocq, Johann Strauss (Richard Strauss, too, is a Cræsus; for details I must refer to my book on him), Sullivan, Milloecker, Suppé, etc. Regarding the composer of *The Merry Widow*, Grieg said: "I think I can say truly that my music, too, is played all over the world. But all my compositions have not brought me in much more than Lehar's income from this operetta in Christiania alone."

CHAPTER XXVI

WHAT IS AMERICAN MUSIC?

In 1906 the editor of the *Revue Bleue* asked some of the most prominent Parisian composers for their views on the subject of French music. Vincent d' Indy replied that there was no such thing as a national French music. Berlioz he considered a genius, but not a genuine French composer. Bruneau, on the other hand, replied that in his opinion there is a specifically French music, and Berlioz its Messiah!

When we thus find two leading musicians expressing diametrically opposed opinions on the subject of nationality in the music of their country—one of the oldest and most important musical countries in the world—we surely cannot wonder that there should be so little light, and such a conflict of opinion, on the subject of national traits in the music of a country which, like ours, is still in its infancy, so far as this art is concerned.

THE CURRENT VIEW

Booker Washington writes in the preface to a collection of negro melodies, made by S. Coleridge Taylor, that his race realizes that "apart from the

music of the red man the negro folk song is the only distinctively American music." This is the almost universal belief today among the whites of this country, too. In an article in *The Etude* (April, 1906), Constantin von Sternberg spoke contemptuously of the composers who claimed recognition for their insignificant effusions because they happened to be born in America. He declared that while we have plenty of "American writers of compositions," the first "writer of American compositions" has yet to make his appearance. He gives this recipe for hastening the advent of such a composer:

"Bring up one set of musically gifted boys on contrapuntal and harmonic studies based no longer or no longer exclusively, on the Bach chorale or Moody and Sankey, but on plantation melodies for a *Cantus Firmus*, and we shall soon have a symphony which shall not be called American by its author but which the public will spontaneously and enthusiastically acclaim as an 'American Symphony.' "

Mr. Krehbiel is somewhat more optimistic. In his opinion, as expressed in *The Etude* (Dec. 1905, and March, 1906), not only has the American slave music "a potential capacity for artistic development," but Dr. Dvorák has, in his '*New World Symphony*' and in a quartet (Op. 96), and a quintet (Op. 97), already shown what admirable use can be made of "the spirit of negro melody and some of its literal idiom." Then came Edward

MacDowell with his *Indian Suite* and "his exquisite pianoforte piece *From an Indian Lodge* . . . While the skeptical critics talked, Dvorák and MacDowell walked. To say the least, they set up finger posts which will be looked at more than once while composers are hunting for a distinctive note in American music."

MUSIC OF THE RED MAN

Less faith in the potentiality of Indian and negro music was shown by Louis C. Elson. While paying his tribute to MacDowell's *Indian Suite* as "the most important and beautiful work as yet evolved from Indian sources," he declares in his *History of American Music* that "the mine of folk music in this direction is far more restricted than the large repertoire would seem to indicate," and he adds that "one does not feel quite convinced that the Indian music is a substantial foundation for the native composer to use in classical work."

On the other hand, again, two of the younger American composers, Harvey Worthington Loomis and Arthur Farwell, have taken up with great enthusiasm the problem of building up an American art on Indian melodies.

Mr. Farwell expressed his belief in *Out West*, that the American composer has at his hand "a wealth of musical material of the highest order, sufficient wholly to revolutionize the present Germanic aspect of our musical life." With the aid

of the Wa-Wan Press he attempted to impress this view on his contemporaries.

Mr. Loomis also has been impressed by "the wealth of Indian melody in this country." But melody, he says, is merely the skyline of music. "The notes that the Indian sings are the smallest part of his music. It is the vibrato of his voice, the rhythm of the chant, the warring scheme of drum beats, his refined disregard of pitch, and of that conflicting tonality which his neighbors essay—these things go to fulfill the true beauty of its barbaric ugliness."

The problem for the American composer is to find a way of reproducing the spirit and color of Indian music without the aid of that "vibrato of the voice" and the other barbaric accessories referred to. Here modern harmony and instrumentation come to our aid. Mr. Loomis believes that in the case of all pronounced nationalists in music—like Grieg, Dvorák, Tchaikovsky—"it has been either the harmonic or the orchestral color that has put the ethnological stamp upon the melodic specimen."

In his very interesting *Lyrics of the Red Man* (published by the Wa-Wan Press), he has exemplified his tenets, supplying characteristic Indian melodies with harmonies of the most wild and daring character, which emphasize their barbarian spirit; the result being music such as, in all probability, the Indians themselves would have made had they got as far as modern harmony in their artistic development.

Here we certainly have American music of a kind—unlike anything to be heard in Europe. Mr. Loomis deserves great praise for the ingenuity displayed in these pieces and songs, which will be widely known and admired some day. When, aided by Mrs. Katherine Fiske, he gave an Indian concert in New York in the Spring of 1905, half-a-dozen of the numbers had to be repeated. One of these was *The Chattering Squaw* (Cree: "So they cut off her tongue"), in which consecutive fourths and fifths produce a cacophony reminding one of the medieval Organum of Hucbald's day. Another was the *Zuñi He is coming—Montezuma*, which resembles a Japanese national tune.

While admitting the great musical and ethnological interest of these pieces, I expressed the opinion that the Indian melodies, like the Chinese tunes incorporated by Edgar Stillman Kelley in some of his works, cannot serve as basis of the American music of the future, but only as occasional spices; and in a conversation on the subject Mr. Loomis practically agreed with me. It is also well to bear in mind that Edward MacDowell, after writing his *Indian Suite* and his *From an Indian Lodge*, did not show any further disposition to exploit this field. As Lawrence Gilman has well said in his book on MacDowell, he realized, doubtless, "that territorial propinquity is quite a different thing from racial affinity; and that a musical art derived from either Indian or Ethiopian sources,

can be 'American' only in a partial and quite unimportant sense."

Let us now see if the so-called negro music gives a more hopeful outlook for the future of specifically American music.

REAL VS. ALLEGED NEGRO MUSIC

On the subject of negro music the most amazingly vague and contradictory views are current. Some writers maintain that it is all African; others, that there is nothing African in it; and these, again, hold a picturesque variety of opinions, some treating negro music as purely American, others as European. "Originally from the Spanish," is the verdict of Mr. Farwell; while Mr. Sternberg stands up for Portugal: "The Portuguese and Spanish influences were subsequently crowded out by the Dutch and English, but the old song remained and the negro not only preserved it, but he has—through his numerous generations—adapted it to the cadence of the American language." Another Philadelphian, Dr. Martin Darkow, sets forth the following views in the "Amerika" number of *Die Musik*:

"All the traits that are named as characteristics of negro music are, as a matter of fact, to be found in the music of Great Britain and Ireland. The pentatonic scale (without the fourth and seventh), we find among the Scotch (see Mendelssohn's 'Scotch Symphony'), the accenting of the weak

beat in Irish songs, the quick six-eight time in the Irish jig, the refrain in the English ballad (not to be confounded with the Barman Ballade). The decided predominance of the major mode, even where the melody overflows with sentiment is also a peculiarity of the music of the Anglo-Saxon race, if not of all vigorous, active races . . . To sum up: In the so-called negro music there is nothing to be found that cannot be traced back to Irish and Scotch folk songs. English ballads, the war-like hymns of the Puritans, and so on.

Out of this mass of conflicting opinions, how are we to distill the truth? My answer is:

1. By conceding that there is a grain of truth in most of the opposing claims made.

2. By distinguishing carefully between the music created by the negroes and that which is merely sung and played by them.

Some years ago Col. Dangerfield Parker wrote to me in regard to the notion that we have a quasi-national art in the form of negro music:

“The so-called negro music has been composed by white men—Foster and others—and in the very few instances where negroes have attempted composition, their pieces have been imitations (feeble ones) of the works of the whites. I am half Southern by blood. I have been interested in this matter for years; have been an extensive traveller, and have made it a study; but I have never yet been able to put my finger upon a piece of music composed by a negro excepting one song by Blind Tom,

whose ear was educated, so to speak, to white methods, and whose song was an imitation of those of white composers. In my childhood I have heard, in the mountains of Tennessee, negroes singing a sort of wild melancholy chant, which may have originally been brought from Africa, but no one knew—they least of all. So with hymns of a peculiar wild and plaintive character I have heard in Louisiana.”

It is these “wild and melancholy” strains that represent the true negro music. Booker Washington says that, “according to the testimony of African students at Tuskegee, there are in the native African melodies strains that reveal the close relationship between the negro music of America and Africa.” Mrs. Jeanette Murphy, of Orlando, Florida, who heard these African strains during the days of her girlhood in Kentucky, has written an interesting brochure on them; she sings them in the true negro style at her lecture recitals, and they sound strangely exotic. This is real negro music, but its essence is African. To use it as a basis of *American* art music would be absurd; to call it “American folk music” is a foolish juggling with words. We might as well try to build up an American poetic art on Chinese or Japanese legends.

But how about the rest of the so-called negro music—that which has none of the African tang? It is not negro music at all, but merely white music that has been assimilated and sung by the black man. The negroes are astonishingly clever imita-

tors. In Angola, for instance, they "whistle and sing every tune they have heard once from a European." When the Austrian expert, Richard Wallaschek, who has written a book on *Primitive Music*, examined the earliest collections of American slave songs, made by Miss M'Kim and H. G. Spaulding, he was surprised to find them "ignorantly 'arranged'—not to say ignorantly borrowed—from the national songs of all nations, from military signals, well-known marches, German student songs, etc."

This tells the whole story. Most of the alleged negro songs are a hodge-podge of Spanish, Portuguese, English, German, French, American tunes; above all, *American*; and this brings me to one of the most important points of this article—the relation of our great folk song writer, Stephen Foster, to negro music.

JUSTICE TO STEPHEN FOSTER

There is a world of significance in the fact that Foster's best song, *Old Folks at Home*, was bought by the negro minstrel, Edwin P. Christy, who published it as "written and composed" by himself. This sums up the whole situation. Foster was a poor fellow who had to make his living as best he could, by selling his songs in the most profitable market. In those days the entertainments of the negro minstrels (real or "corked"), were about the only "concerts" for which the American public

had any use. Songs about plantation life were particularly in demand; hence Foster attended negro camp meetings, studied plantation life in general, and used the negro dialect in some of his songs. This dialect, however, is the only negro trait in them; the sentiments expressed are those of whites rather than of blacks, and *the music is entirely Foster's*. Yet, because this plantation music is set to words in negro dialect and was sung for decades throughout the country by negroes or blackened whites, ninety-nine persons out of a hundred of us still cling to the delusion that it is music created, or at least inspired, by the negroes!

It is no such thing. There is not a black spot in these Foster songs, which are the best things, by far, of all that is comprised under the head of plantation music. They are white songs, the inspirations of one of the most original and emotional of melodists the world has seen; yet we have hitherto allowed these genuine American songs to be spoken of as part of that negro or slave music which is, we are told every day, "the only distinctively American music!" Surely it is high time to end this nonsense; to render unto Foster what is Foster's, unto America what is America's.

John Habberton has called Foster "the world's greatest song writer." Had he said "folk song writer" he would have come nearer the truth. I did not include Foster in my book on *Songs and Song Writers*, because that is concerned with art songs, and Foster wrote no art songs; his har-

monies seldom go beyond tonic, dominant, and subdominant. But as folk songs, his tunes rank among the very best in the world; and being different from those of all European countries, they are *specifically American*.

If Mr. Sternberg wants to use these plantation melodies for a *Cantus Firmus*, well and good; the resulting exercises and compositions will no doubt be American (though not negro). We all know how that great Bohemian, Dr. Dvorák, gave his wonderful symphony *From the New World* a delightful American tang by saturating it with the *spirit* of plantation music. But, after all, there is not much room in the musical world for this sort of thing. We surely cannot hope to build up our *whole* American music of the future on the folk songs of Foster. Quite likely, some of our future composers will feel tempted to follow the example of MacDowell, Dvorák, Chadwick, Gotschalk, Broekhoven, Loomis, Cadman, Spalding and others of spicing a few of their works with Indian or plantation melodies; they may even, in a humorous piece, or a boisterous finale, introduce a suggestion of "the rude chant of the cowboy," in which Loomis and Farwell are interested; but the bulk and substance of American music will not come from these borrowed or suggested sources; it will come from the brains of original, individual composers, who are American in thought and feeling.

INDIVIDUAL GENIUS VS. FOLK SONG

What I cannot understand is why it should be so generally taken for granted that a national music can be built up only on folk song. Are peasants the only nationalists? Haydn, no doubt, was influenced by Croatian, Chopin by Polish, Grieg by Norwegian idiosyncrasies of melody and rhythm; yet the weight of their individual genius reduced these influences to a minimum; there is infinitely more of Haydn, of Chopin, of Grieg in their works than of Croatia, Poland, and Norway. In Russia many composers have written national music but Tchaikovsky o'ertops them all, because he has so much greater an *individuality*. That individuality is his contribution to Russian *national music*; he is one of the nation, and it is worth more than the contributions of a million peasant singers.

In Germany the cases of Bach, Weber, and Wagner are particularly instructive. Bach was influenced by the Lutheran choral, Weber by the folk song of the country; yet in both cases, are not their *individual* contributions to the art quite as German as their borrowings, and *infinitely more important*? Wagner began his career with "ludicrous and undisguised imitations of Donizetti." His *Rienzi* was modelled after French spectacular operas. His *Flying Dutchman* and *Lohengrin* betray the influence of Marschner and Weber; and then came his last and greatest works, unadulterated Wagner. Shall we say these are not German because there are

in them no imitations of German folk songs? Preposterous thought!

There is the guiding star for the American composer. Let him drop the notion that he cannot be American unless he echoes Indian, negro, Foster, or cowboy tunes. Let him, like Wagner, study and copy Italian, French, German or other models; and finally let him, like Wagner, add to the treasures of our music the products of his *individual* genius. This will not prevent him from being racy of our soil, as Wagner is racy of the German soil. Although this is a cosmopolitan country, there is much that is peculiar or unique in our language, habits, climate, humor, sentiment, scenery, history; and these things will be reflected more and more in our music, as they are, for instance, in the *Woodland Sketches* and the *Sea Pieces* of Edward MacDowell, whose later works in particular have traits that differentiate them from the music of European masters and must therefore be called American.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE LUDICROUS SONATA IDOL

When Darwinism and the theory of evolution first became subjects of discussion a school girl said to an eminent naturalist: "Professor, you surely don't mean to say that *I* am descended from a monkey?"

Quick as a flash came the answer: "It must have been a very charming monkey!"

Nevertheless, African simians, as I have heard on good authority, held indignation meetings when they heard of Darwin's impudent insinuations regarding the descent of man. I can well believe it.

In the musical world, in particular, there is such a vast amount of foolishness that no educated chimpanzee (you know how intelligent they are) could listen without mounting wrath to such a genealogical insult.

In newspaper articles I have referred repeatedly to the curious disinclination of musicians to use their brains—assuming generously that they have any. Today I wish to dwell on a subject which is quite as preposterously ridiculous as the "Disgraceful Tempo Rubato Muddle" about which I wrote in a preceding chapter.

KREISLER'S ALLEGED CRIME

There are several reasons why Fritz Kreisler is so popular. I am concerned here with only one of them: his playing preferably of short pieces, most of them of an emotional nature.

Kreisler is not only the greatest of living violinists now before the public; he is also a scholar. He has made a thorough study of the musical literature of the past, for the same reason that gold and diamond hunters have explored Alaska and South Africa and other regions. And whenever he found a nugget or a gem he separated it from the surrounding rubbish, gave it a jeweller's setting, and proudly exhibited it to his delighted audiences.

In thus rescuing and bringing forward priceless treasures that had been hidden and forgotten, some of them for centuries, he never imagined, poor fellow, that he was committing a crime.

What was the crime?

The musicians and critics whose opinions were "made in Germany" will answer you quite seriously. His crime consisted, in the first place, in his playing short pieces instead of long ones. It is with music as with the other arts, and in nature. No short poem or book is ever so good as a long one; no small picture is as meritorious as a big one; no Greek temple or St. Mark's Church is equal in merit to a New York skyscraper; no humming bird is as beautiful as a goose; no diamond or ruby is as lovely as a big boulder.

Please don't laugh, kind reader. The second reason why Kreisler is a criminal is that many of the short pieces played by him he ruthlessly chopped off from sonatas, which he thus mutilated horribly.

What is a sonata? Don't you know? Never mind what the books say. In reality a sonata is a composition made up of two, three, or four short pieces which, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, have no more organic connection with each other than so many railway cars which happen to be coupled together.

To keep up the metaphor; in his travels in search of good things for the violinist's repertory (which is somewhat limited) Kreisler occasionally came upon a train made up of four freight cars, three of which were loaded with gravel, the fourth with gold nuggets. He saved the fourth—and the fourth alone.

For such a crime he surely deserves to be severely criticised. Not only does he nefariously offer to his audiences old gold and gems without the worthless slag and dross that originally went with them in the sonatas, but his success has encouraged other violinists to follow his horrible example. He has therefore, as a New York critic solemnly remarked not long ago, "much to answer for." And again I beg the reader to refrain from laughing.

On second thought you may laugh all you want to; for surely there are few things funnier than the still widely prevalent worship of the sonata fetish. I have riddled that wooden idol with my

shotgun hundreds of times and others have done the same; but still the idolaters kneel before it, chant its praises and cast scornful glances at anything that is shorter than a sonata, or more coherent.

One of the funniest details of this idolatry is the assumption that a sonata, to be quite what a sonata should be, must consist of four movements—no more, no less.

DOGS VERSUS SONATAS

Many prominent musicians and critics hold this opinion, thereby illustrating the deplorable disinclination of musicians to reading and research.

As a matter of fact, if we take a birdseye view of the evolution of the sonata, from Emanuel Bach to Beethoven, we find that the four-movement form is not the rule but the exception. The greater number are in three movements, and many, both Italian and German, throughout the eighteenth century, were written in two movements only. Listen to this:

In a collection of seventy-two sonatas, published about 1760 under the name of "*Oeuvres Mêlées*," only twenty are in four movements, and one is in five. Of Emanuel Bach's many sonatas two are in two movements, all the others in three. The three-movement scheme was also used almost exclusively by Dussek, Clementi, Haydn, Mozart, and many other composers. Among Haydn's thirty-five sonatas for piano there is only one with four move-

ments. Out of thirty-six of the best-known Mozart sonatas twenty-nine have three movements, and only one has four. Of his eighteen sonatas for violin and piano seven are in two movements, the eleven others are in three.

Of special interest is Beethoven's practice in this matter. Surely he, the acknowledged perfector of the sonata, must have favored the four-movement form? He did not. Of his pianoforte sonatas less than one-half—only fifteen out of thirty-two—are in four movements. Of the others, eleven are in three, while six of them have only two movements, among these being his last word on this subject, opus III.

Beethoven had a way of stopping when he had nothing more to say. That's why some of his sonatas have only three or two movements. Those in two are just as good and as complete, from the formal point of view, as the others; yet it is the fashion with those whose brains are among the unemployed to refer to them as "torsos"! It is to laugh.

Thus we see that Beethoven was not like his idolators who got on their knees before the four-movement sonata fetish. And he still further rebuked these idol worshippers by taking all sorts of liberties with the sonata, which they held and still hold so sacred.

He would have laughed—and probably often did laugh—at the notion so sternly promulgated by orthodox critics that to leave out a movement or

two of one of his sonatas is to maltreat and mutilate it. "A dog"—he might have told them—"is an organic whole. Remove its head or tail, or one of its legs or ears, and you mutilate it. My sonatas are not like that."

I know what I am talking about, not guessing. Here is the evidence on which my assertion is based: His personal friend Schindler tells us that in 1816, when Beethoven was asked by Hofmeister to edit a new edition of his pianoforte works, he decided to reduce some of the early ones from four movements to three, but desisted because his "friends" begged him not to.

In several cases he did remove or transfer movements. The andante which originally constituted the second movement of the Waldstein was subsequently taken out by him and published separately as *Andante Favorsi*. The final presto of the Kreutzer sonata was originally a part of the A major sonata, opus 30, No. 1. The fourth movement of the quartet, opus 30, was originally in another key and intended for another quartet.

In regard to his piano sonata opus 106 he wrote to Ries that if it should be found unsuitable for London he might omit the largo and begin at once with the fugue in the last part, or else play the first movement, the adagio, and for the third the scherzo, and the largo and allegro risoluto. He added: "I leave that to you, as you may find it advisable."

IGNORANT "TORSO" SHOUTERS

Here we have absolutely conclusive evidence that to Beethoven himself a sonata, even of his most mature period, was not a terrible fetish to touch or alter which would result in a "torso."

The moral of my tale is that professional pianists should drop their fear of the ignorant "torso" shouters among the critics. They should follow the example of Fritz Kreisler and apply his way to all sonatas, including Beethoven's—playing only the best movements. There has been an alarming decrease of interest in them in recent years, and that is the only way to keep what is best in them before the public, which is *not* a fetish worshipper. It knows very well that, with very few exceptions, a sonata is simply a group of four unconnected pieces, and doesn't care a straw if one or two, or three are left out, provided what is left is moving or entertaining.

BEETHOVEN FOUGHT AGAINST SONATA FORM

The great composers themselves knew long ago that the sonata was doomed to make way for pieces like Chopin's which, while shorter, are coherent in every part and bar.

"In Beethoven, so far as sonata and sonata form are concerned, we seem as it were, to perceive the beginning of a period of decay," says Shedlock, in his admirable book on the pianoforte sonata.

On another page he declares frankly that "*Beethoven fought against sonata-form.*"

So did other composers. Schumann fretted and fumed under its fetters. More than three quarters of a century ago he wrote prophetically that "although from time to time fine specimens of the sonata species made their appearance and, probably, would continue to do so, it seemed as if that form of composition had run its appointed course."

It is too artificial, too incoherent, as a form, to survive. Let it die a natural death. At any rate don't, for mercy's sake, continue to make a fetish of so imperfect a thing as a sonata. Use your brains!

And you pianists, some of whom served bravely in the army, won't you please show your courage also in defying the academic critics and, encouraged by the actions of Beethoven, play the best movements of sonatas separately?

CHAPTER XXVIII

IS THE SYMPHONY PLAYED OUT?

It would be foolish to ask: "Are symphonies played out?" We all know they are not. At nearly every orchestral concert throughout this country and Europe a symphony is played, and this in the aggregate, makes a large number. To be sure, hundreds of symphonies once popular are now never seen on programs. Of the 104 so-called symphonies of Haydn, at least 100 have vanished; of Mozart's 40 or more, only two or three are heard, at long intervals. The name of many minor composers, once familiar to concert-goers, are now a mere memory, or less than that. Who but an assiduous student of the history of music knows, for instance, that Franz Xaver Richter, of the famous Mannheim school (eighteenth century), composed 69 symphonies? Scores of cases like his might be mentioned.

Of Beethoven's nine symphonies the first and second are kept afloat by the buoyancy of the other seven. These, however, will survive many more decades. Nor will the last two of Schubert's be "played out" as long as music remains what it is now; or at least two of Schumann's, or Dvorák's *From the New World*; or the fourth, fifth and

sixth of Tchaikovsky; and others that might be named, including Brahms's second, which may be called an "immortal" masterwork, although, to be sure, Brahms himself was skeptical on this subject. When an enthusiast spoke to him about a certain composition being immortal he asked, with a sarcastic smile, "How long?"

Leaving immortality out of the question, it is safe to say that within this century at any rate it would be foolish to ask, "Are symphonies played out?"

An entirely different thing is the question, "Is the symphony played out?"—that is, the symphonic *form*.

This question I answer deliberately and vociferously with a "yes," and I maintain, furthermore, that the great symphonic works just referred to have been successful not because they were composed in the symphonic form, but in spite of that great disadvantage. These points I intend to illuminate in this chapter with a ruthless calcium light.

A WARNING TO AMERICAN COMPOSERS

The attention of American composers, in particular, is called to what follows. Some of them are still dreaming of winning fame by perpetrating long-winded symphonies or sonatas in four interminable movements. If they understood the situation they would not thus waste their time trying to put new wine into old bottles. The new bottles are of the "non-refillable" sort. What I mean by

that is that no two *symphonic poems* have quite the same form.

A warning illustration of the harm done by the symphonic (that is, the *cyclic*) form may be found in the fate of chamber music. In the whole of the United States, with a hundred millions of inhabitants, there are not half a dozen chamber-music organizations of national fame. The best known are as everybody knows, the Kneisel Quartet and the Flonzaley Quartet, and it is extremely doubtful if these two would have been able to reach their great preëminence had they not been fostered by two millionaires—Colonel Higginson, of Boston, who gave the Kneisels their start, and the late E. J. DeCoppet, who must have spent at least \$100,000 on the Flonzaley Quartet before it became self-supporting.

Now, why is there so very little public interest in chamber music? * Chiefly because of the deadly monotony and academic formalism of the programs. Look at the scheme. The first of five or six subscription concerts has a program offering as its first number a quartet in four movements: *allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro*. The second number is another quartet in four movements: *Allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro*. The third number is another quartet (or possibly a quintet) in four movements: *Allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro*.

* I repeat here what I have said in another chapter, for the sake of further details and to drive in the nail—a coffin nail unless writers and players of chamber music use their brains and reform.

The second subscription concert begins with a quartet in four movements: Allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro. The second number is a—"but for heaven's sake, stop," I hear the reader exclaim. Well, that's just the way I feel at every chamber-music concert I attend. After the second number in four movements—allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro—I have had all I can stand of that sort of thing and I make for the door as if I had heard a fire alarm.

Even Mr. DeCoppet, though he was so passionately fond of chamber music that he spent a fortune on it, found three successive quartets in four movements, allegro (beg pardon!) too much for his nerves. He told me once that after the second quartet in four movements, allegro (you can't throw anything at me!), he had enough, and was apt to find the third a bore. Now if he, a devoted enthusiast, felt that way, how must it be with the average concert-goer? A few hundred devotees may stand that sort of boredom, as they do a dogmatically dull sermon, from a sense of pious duty, but the thousands, after an experience or two, dodge chamber music as they do an automobile.

A great pity it is, too, for there is so much in chamber music that is beautiful and moving, and that might and would be enjoyed by thousands (instead of a select few) were it not for that everlasting allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro. The chief culprits, of course, are the composers, who, because Haydn and Mozart wrote quartets in four move-

ments, seem to think that quartets must be written in four movements till doomsday. There is nothing quite so stupid in the history of any other art.

It is done for the sake of contrast, we are told. Fiddlesticks! Is there no other way of securing contrast than by playing four long movements in different tempo in succession? What a testimonial to poverty of formal invention. How far the chamber-music composers are behind those who write for the piano! Pianists, too, used to be fed, with their audiences, chiefly on sonatas in four movements—allegro, adagio, scherzo, allegro—but Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Grieg, Rubinstein Liszt, MacDowell and many others showed a better way with their short pieces, fashioned in an infinite variety of patterns, and today the programs of pianists seldom include more than one sonata, and, with increasing frequency, none at all.

The unfortunate chamber musicians may ask: "But what are we to do as long as the composers, while favoring the pianists with a hundred attractive free forms, keep us forever in the prison of the cyclic form of four contrasting movements?"

What are you to do? Exert pressure on living composers—here is a chance for Americans!—make them drop the stupidly suicidal cyclic form and save chamber music by giving it the same advantage the pianists have been enjoying for nearly a century. In the meantime, take the law into your own hands. Take your hammer and smash the quartets, old and new, into fragments, then pick out the best move-

ments, put them on your programs, and you will attract a hundred for every ten that now come to your entertainments. It would be well, furthermore, to arrange for quartet players short pieces composed for piano or other instruments. Beethoven showed the way to this when he arranged his piano-forte Sonata, opus 14, for strings. The Kneisel Quartet played this in New York on February 6, 1917.

IN THE SAME BOAT

To be sure some pedantic critics, wiser than Beethoven, would raise a great rumpus if this were done. They would shout "murder" and "sacrilege," and if only one movement of a quartet were played, as I just recommended, they would accuse the players of "destroying organic unity," and that sort of thing. But there is no organic unity whatever between the four movements of most quartets, nor is there between the four movements of most symphonies. They are in the same boat as the quartets.

If that is the case why do so many more persons attend orchestral concerts than chamber-music concerts?

Because an orchestra, with its multitude of instruments of diverse tone-color, presents a much greater variety of impressions, and because orchestral programs are very rarely made up of three symphonies of four movements each. There is seldom more

than one, and, with increasing frequency, none at all.

The time will come when symphonies, as well as quartets, will be dismembered and only their best movements played. An exception will be made of those of which all the movements are equally inspired. There are possibly twenty or two dozen symphonies that come under this head. All the others have one, two or three movements that were stuck in by the composer merely to do homage to the artificial cyclical form, which is no form—that is no organic form—at all.

A dog has organic form. Cut off his tail, or his ears, or one of his legs, and his form is mutilated. Clip off one of the wings of a butterfly, or the fins of a fish, and everybody can see at a glance that something is missing. Even the lowly angleworm, if cut in two, is mutilated. But in the case of ninety-nine symphonies out of every hundred you could omit one or two movements, or transpose some of the movements from one opus to another, and no one could possibly demonstrate that there had been any mutilation, like that of chopping off a dog's tail or clipping a butterfly's wings!

With the form, or anatomical structure, of each of the four movements in a symphony, I am not at all concerned in this paper. Much genius and ingenuity have been expended by great masters in building up what is called the sonata-form of the first movement, the song-form of the adagio, or other slow movement, the sprightly scherzo (one

of Beethoven's immortal achievements) and the rondo-form of the final movement. To make my argument perfectly clear, let me repeat once more that the only thing I am fulminating against is the *cyclic* form of the symphony; that is, the composing of mammoth works in four interminable movements which, adding insult to injury, are not in any way connected, and a very large proportion of which, moreover, owe their objectionable existence not to the fact that the composer had something more to say, but to his stupid compliance with the custom of always trotting out the everlasting allegro-adagio-scherzo-allegro.

TWO BIG MISTAKES

Haydn is praised in the histories of music for having separated the three movements of the symphony, as it was before his day, and for adding a minuet before the last movement (for which afterwards Beethoven substituted the scherzo), and thus establishing the form of the cyclic symphony. Fortunately for his good name hereafter Haydn did not add the minuet. The man on whom falls the blame for this innovation is Johann Stamitz, of Mannheim, who died in 1775. Haydn, to be sure, lent the weight of his name to this new departure, and on him falls the odium of having detached the sections of symphonies and making of them separate, incoherent movements, which future composers spun out to tiresome lengths. P. E. Bach's symphonies were

still in three connected parts, but Haydn changed all that, and with him begins the cyclic symphony, which has been the bane of music because it has kept out of the concert halls many thousands who otherwise would have been regular attendants.

Mrs. Theodore Thomas relates, in the very interesting biography she wrote of her great husband, that in the early part of his career the word "symphony" was to the average American concert-goer a synonym for "bore," and "it repelled rather than attracted an audience."

Why was this thusly? Mrs. Thomas thinks that audiences had to be educated up to symphonies. That is true, but there is a deeper reason. Music-lovers, like novel-readers, resent prolixity. The cyclic form of the symphony invites the composers to dwell interminably on their themes. Each movement, they fancy, must last twelve or fifteen minutes, and there *must* be four movements. The result is that many movements evaporate into mere "words, words, words," and with mere words you cannot entertain an audience.

The foolish notion that an elaborate symphony lasting an hour is more important or dignified work, or one evincing greater genius, than a shorter piece, is responsible for such unendurable monstrosities as some of the works of Bruckner and Mahler. When Paderewski told me he was composing a symphony I begged him, almost on my knees, to heed what Dvorák had once said to me: That "no symphony should last more than half an hour." But he was

so interested in his work (that's the trouble!) that he made it last an hour, the result being that it is now played very seldom. It would be played ten times as often if he had heeded Dvorák's advice. Thus do composers harm themselves.

LISZT THE EMANCIPATOR

To come back to Haydn for a second: his blunder in separating the symphonic movements did a tremendous amount of harm, and it was not till Liszt showed a better way, by launching his symphonic poems, that composers saw a chance of escaping from the cyclic monotony of the everlasting allegro-adagio-scherzo-allegro. And how they jostled each other in their eagerness to follow him in this new path! Saint-Saëns was one of the first, and nearly all the composers in France, up to Dukas and Debussy, followed the procession. It was the same way in Russia, in England, in Germany. With the exception of Brahms all the leading orchestral composers thenceforth followed Liszt, though some of them also wrote a few cyclic symphonies, as if to show the critics that they *could* do it. Liszt himself wrote two symphonies, but they are not cyclic works in the old objectionable sense. *Faust* is really a group of three, *Dante* of two, *connected* symphonic poems.

Why were these modern composers (including even such conservatives as Rubinstein and César

Franck) so eager to travel the road opened by Liszt?

Because Liszt, as Saint-Saëns has well said, more courageous than Beethoven and Berlioz, completely broke the mould of the symphony and the venerable overture, and in place of these (the only two forms available to composers at that time) proclaimed the rule of music free from artificial rules and choosing whatever pattern the composer desires. While Stamitz and Haydn had introduced a *dance* (the minuet) in the symphony, Liszt showed composers how, by following *literary* models, they could create an endless variety of forms (such as the pianists revel in, yet different) through the adoption of the Wagnerian system of leading motives which unites all the parts of a symphonic poem into a coherent whole.

The form of Liszt's symphonic poems is therefore as superior to the incoherent cyclic symphonies as that of Wagner's music dramas is in organic unity to the string of unconnected and non-recurring airs that make up the old-fashioned opera.

It is consequently as inartistic as it is foolish and suicidal for American composers to write symphonies instead of symphonic poems. To be sure it is much easier.

One often reads that while Liszt was the pioneer in this new movement, others, especially Richard Strauss, surpassed him in his own domain. This is not so. Strauss is more polyphonic, but polyphonic complexity in him often degenerates into mere vir-

tuosity—an eagerness to do “stunts” and astonish the natives. Perhaps, as a painter of gorgeous orchestral colors Strauss is even more remarkable than Liszt, and as a cacophonist he is bolder. But as a melodist—the main thing—he is far inferior to Liszt.

One of the chief advantages of the symphonic poem over the “played-out” symphony is brevity. In this respect, also, Liszt set a good example, which our composers should be sure to follow. Ten of his twelve symphonic poems last less than half an hour each—most of them much less. The duration of *Tasso* is 19 minutes; of *Les Préludes*, 15; of *Opheus*, 12; *Mazeppa*, 18; *Festklänge*, 18; *Battle of the Huns*, 16. These are the best and most popular of them.

The best and most popular Strauss tone-poems are also short, as our own composers would do well to remember. They are *Don Juan*, 17 minutes; *Eulenspiegel*, 18; *Death and Transfiguration*, 24. The later ones, which are less inspired and far less popular, are longer: *Zarathustra*, 33; *Don Quixote*, 35; *Heldenleben*, 40; *Domestica*, 45. That way lies oblivion.

CHAPTER XXIX

TEN MUSICAL FAILURES AND WHY THEY FAILED

Musical epicures know that while it may give great pleasure to hear famous musicians at their recitals and concerts, it is far more delightful to hear them informally in a private music room. The trouble is that this is a diversion in which only the very wealthy can indulge. Paderewski used to charge \$5,000 for playing in private houses. Not always, to be sure. A friend of mine who was for a time critic of one of the leading New York dailies, invited him for an evening of trios with Wolf and Hollmann. He went, so did I, as one of the listeners; and I must say that never did I enjoy a public performance of chamber music as I did this private *soirée*.

On another occasion there was among those present a young lady who had just returned from Europe, and was getting ready for her New York *début*. Presently she got up, sat down at the piano, and begun to play—what do you suppose? Why, the whole of the Schumann concerto, solo part alone, before an audience of musical epicures, who were thus bored for forty minutes!

Nobody, so far as I remember, had asked her to

play, and certainly not to play a whole concerto without accompaniment. Her one thought, evidently, was that here was her opportunity to show before a distinguished group of listeners what she had learned. It was not a musical thing to do, but simply an exhibition of vanity. I said to my neighbor "She will be a failure"—and she was a failure, of course. To succeed, she would have had to have some consideration for her audience, and to love Schumann's music more than herself, besides a number of other things.

Were I to write down the names of all the young men and women who have thus failed because they thought of themselves first and of the music secondly, they would fill pages.

Small is the number of singers who can make a comfortable living by giving recitals. There are diverse reasons for this, but probably the principal one is that most singers, in making up a program, pay little if any attention to the quality of the songs, but choose this or that merely because it shows off the good points in each particular singer's voice. But high-class audiences are not specially interested in the good points of a voice, unless it is used to display to advantage the good traits of a worth-while song.

WHEN CARUSO FAILED

These singers should bear in mind that even the enormously popular Caruso, vocal pet of the universe, repeatedly failed to make a success in operas

that had been chosen for him not for their intrinsic merits but to show off his voice. If singers pondered that weighty fact, what a revolutionary improvement there would be in the make-up of programs!

The editor of *The Etude* asked me to write, out of the abundance of my forty years' experience as a critic, concerning ten failures and to give the reasons therefor. Obviously, I cannot give names. Nor are names necessary, for each of the failures I shall consider represents a type.

As my second type let me take the young musician who has no taste—who doesn't know the difference between good and medium songs and pieces. Some time ago I had an interesting talk with a professional accompanist, who assured me I had no idea how utterly unmusical many singers are. Blessed with a pretty voice, they think that is all that is necessary. The names of the great song writers are hardly known to them, much less their songs. To please a manager, a publisher, friends, or just out of sheer ignorance, they make up the most insipid programs and then wonder why the critics sneer and the public fails to appear. I am speaking, of course, of those who appear in halls where real artists are heard and real music lovers assemble. In vaudeville and other kindred places singing of trash does not spell failure.

Singers have no monopoly of trash. A great deal of it is inflicted on the public by violinists and pianists. I have just said that I can give no names, but

for my third type of failure I describe that of a well-known violinist.

This violinist for twenty years was a public pet on two continents, was awarded distinction in London and received great honors from a Pope. Is it not absurd to call such a player a failure? Perhaps it is but I am doing it all the same. I do it because I look at this matter from a high artistic viewpoint. "A marvellous technician, he lays too much stress on the mere exhibition of skill, and arranges his programs chiefly to suit the popular taste that is readily satisfied with brilliant execution."

In this brief sentence this violinist's artistic status—and stature—are succinctly summed up in a Dictionary of Musicians. That is the general verdict of criticism. This violinist has failed to be named with the highest class of violinists because in his playing his nimble fingers are so much more in evidence than his head or his heart. Finger success is never lasting.

ULTRACEREBRAL PIANISTS AND COMPOSERS

Contrast with this the career of Fritz Kreisler. He was a failure at the start because he refused to attract attention by exhibiting the usual fiddlers' tricks of digital dexterity. But gradually music lovers discovered that expression, temperament, style, and emotion made his playing a thing of beauty and a joy forever. His reputation increased in a steady way, and today he always plays to overflow-

ing audiences and everywhere is acknowledged the world's foremost violinist. That is what may be called success. I am proud of a letter I got from him after his wonderful success in London, in which he thanked me for having stood by him from the beginning. I could give the names of a number of violinists who failed because they followed the example of the other violinist instead of that of Kreisler. To be sure, the example of Kreisler is very hard to follow; to do so successfully one must have genius, and genius cannot be acquired—or can it?

Maud Powell was not only a superlative artist but also one of the most intelligent women I have known. Fritz Kreisler is a scholar and philosopher as well as a super-violinist; and I have known other brainy wielders of the bow. As a rule, however, the most intellectual musicians are the pianists. I could name a dozen, from Liszt to Paderewski, who have been noted for their mental brilliancy and wit as well as their splendid playing. I could give the names of another dozen who were top-heavy; in other words, whose too scholarly interest in the intellectual side of music resulted in their failure as public players.

A warning to players and students is particularly timely at present. Scholarship is a valuable and fine thing but it repels the public at large. Many a splendid young woman has remained unmarried because her too scholarly mind did not allure men. I spoiled the most original and valuable of my books, *Primitive Love and Love Stories*, by cramming its

800 pages with largely superfluous results of scholarly researches in European and American libraries on the courtship and marriage customs of savages the world over. As a specialist on the subject (it was my second book on love) I was intensely interested in every detail relating to it, and forgot that other persons could not be expected to be so voluminously interested. Consequently the book was a failure. If some kind friend had blue-penciled one-half of the manuscript, I would have made a fortune out of that book. But how I should have hated that friend!

Well, many musicians—particularly composers and pianists—are as suicidally scholarly as I was when I wrote that book (which is already out of print). Even so great a giant as Richard Wagner came near ruining his wonderful Nibelung operas because he made the poems much too long and could not persuade himself to leave out any of the redundant lines when he set them to music. On that rock many other composers of operas as well as of symphonies have wrecked their ships; they strewed the strand as densely as sea shells.

“Less would be more”—if musicians, in writing compositions or making programs, always bore that in mind, the number of failures would be greatly reduced.

They would also be greatly lessened if musicians—particularly pianists—did not overweight their programs with too many pieces that appeal merely to the intellect, leaving the feelings as cold as a

snowdrift. The modern dissonantal subtleties which interest trained musicians will never attract the general paying public, which will *always*—don't forget that—prefer euphony and melody (with *some* dissonance for piquancy's sake) to pieces that are unnecessarily complex and cacophonous. I could name here a pianist of rare ability and promise who wrecked his career by ostentatiously and persistently pelting his audiences with music of unmitigated ugliness. He was worse than the men whom Ruskin accused of "flinging pots of paint in the public's face."

People who want noise can go to a boiler factory, or listen to the builders of a skyscraper.

OTHER CAUSES OF FAILURE

Reginald De Koven was a musical critic as well as a composer of operettas. Once he wrote an article in which he referred to girls who, after a year's training of their pretty voices, had obtained engagements in operetta companies which yielded 200 to 300 dollars a week.

There are such cases, but among the dozens that I have known I could name only two or three whose fragile voices survived the ordeal of singing, every evening and Saturday afternoon, a trying part which would have tested the powers of a strong, well-seasoned voice.

There is something particularly pathetic about these failures; for under proper guidance these

young girls might have won fame and enduring success.

One often reads that there is no fool like an old fool. I doubt it. The most foolish of mortals seem to me to be the young girls who, instead of studying patiently for years, walk into the spider-webs of unscrupulous charlatans who, for a big sum, promise to land them on the stage—in an absurdly short time. Jail is the proper place for such teachers; but they live in palatial studios, thanks to the suicidal folly of these girls.

What becomes of the tens of thousands of girls studying in music schools and with private teachers? So far as their aims and ambitions are concerned, all but one or two in a hundred—or shall I say in a thousand?—are failures. Why? In answer to this question I never tire of quoting an experienced critic, Emilie Frances Bauer, who knows what she is talking about:

“Teachers of the piano and voice will say frankly: ‘I cannot get my pupils to study harmony; they do not feel the necessity of it, and they won’t.’ They won’t! That is the sum and substance of it. And the vocal students *won’t* study languages, and they *won’t* read good *literature*, and they *won’t* study dramatic action, and they *won’t* go to hear good music, even though they could hear many things of an educative nature without paying for them. What they will do is to tell you how the managers won’t work for them, and how the public won’t encourage them, and how much fault they find with Mme.

Destinn and with Mme. Sembrich and with Mary Garden. They have time for all this. If they go to the opera they do not go to learn the great things and the good things, they go for the pleasure they derive from telling afterwards how this or that was off pitch, and how tired they are of others, and how badly the great artists sing and still hold their own while struggling young artists (?) can't get a hearing."

There are exceptions, plenty of them; young women and men who work hard and avoid all the causes of failure mentioned in the foregoing, and who nevertheless fail. Lack of opportunity is responsible in some cases; lack of cash to pay for an education and début, in other cases. It is quite possible that Geraldine Farrar might not have become "the best-known woman in America" had not a wealthy lady advanced her \$30,000.

Then, for number eight, there is stage fright. I could give the name of more than one artist who had everything necessary for a first-class success, but who failed simply because as soon as they appeared before an audience they were routed by the artist's worse enemy, stage fever, which, as I have said in *Success in Music and How it is Won*, "makes the singer's voice tremble and get off the pitch, the violinist's arm quiver, the pianist's fingers lose their cunning. The memory becomes confused, technical execution incorrect, and expression is of course out of the question."

In that book I have given details showing that,

with the exception of Patti, most of the great artists suffer from stage fright; but they overcome it by concentrating their minds entirely on the music, forgetting themselves as well as the audience. That's what, among others, the Brazilian pianist, Guiomar Novaes, does so marvelously well. The individuals I have referred to could not do it, so they failed.

Ill health and lack of care for the body are responsible for hundreds of failures. I have often marveled at young women with the frailest of bodies, entering a race which calls for the strength of an Amazon and "a capacity for working longer and harder than any laboring man ever dreamed of doing," as Maud Powell put it. No amount of talent or strength of will can overcome the impediment of ill-health—at least for any length of time. Eating too much and exercising and sleeping too little are among the things which make lasting success impossible. "Good singing is seven-eighths a question of digestion" a well-known artist once said to me.

I have reserved for number ten, the cause of more failures than all the other factors combined: The lack of magnetism and heart. Let me cite two of the most prominent and popular artists of our time on this point. "You can train the voice," said Luisa Tetrazzini, "You can take the raw material and make of it a finished product; not so the heart. It is there or it is not there; if it is not there you will never move an audience to tears. You will

never find sympathy responding to your lack of sympathy; tears to a tearless voice never!"

"Let me tell you," said Maud Powell, "that the world is full of artists and musicians whose talent and ability command the deepest reverence, who, nevertheless, cannot swell box-office receipts by a single dollar for lack of that elusive quality of magnetism. The great public is moved by human qualities more than by art qualities."

CHAPTER XXX

THE PATRONS AND HELPERS OF GREAT COMPOSERS

It is well known that a wealthy man living in Boston who wanted to do something for the cause of music in America asked Paderewski's advice on the subject, and that the great pianist told him the most useful thing he could do would be to make it possible for Edward MacDowell to give up teaching and devote all his time to composing.

Unfortunately, the foremost American composer was unwilling to accept such an offer. He had a good income, and he enjoyed his teaching—why should he give it up? Then came the offer of the Columbia University professorship of music, which I was foolish enough to urge him to accept—as I saw when it was too late. He had been in the habit of doing most of his composing during the summer months, but now I found him at Peterboro, preparing his college lectures—lectures which someone else might have written as well—or possibly even better, but no one ever can give to the world the songs and piano pieces he might have written during those summers.

If he could have foreseen the shortness of his career he would have acted differently; but he was

a young man of robust health with supposedly thirty or forty years before him, and plenty of time to write down everything worth while that came into his head. He hesitated to accept another man's money from a feeling of pride which was, of course, creditable on general principles, but which he should have suppressed in view of the consideration that, while his teaching was most helpful to some gifted students, it was of infinitely greater importance to the country at large that he should give all his time to creative work.

MADAME VON MECK AND TCHAIKOVSKY

Often, since the death of MacDowell, I have wished he might have read Modeste Tchaikovsky's admirable biography of his brother, Russia's greatest composer. Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky was quite as sensitive and proud as Edward MacDowell, but fortunately for the musical world, which otherwise would never have possessed the greatest of his works, he consented to accept from a wealthy admirer an annual sum which enabled him to give up teaching and save his energies for the composing of masterworks.

The story of this episode in his life is a most interesting one, and almost as romantic as that most beautiful of all musical romances (the courtship of Robert and Clara Schumann), though of an entirely different character.

The wealthy admirer referred to was Nadejda

Filaretovna von Meck. She had not always been wealthy; indeed, as she once wrote to the composer, she was poor, very poor, the greater part of her life. "My husband," she continued, "was an engineer in the Government service with a salary of 1,500 roubles (\$750) a year, which was all we had to live upon, with five children and my husband's family on our hands. . . . I was nurse, governess and sewing-maid to my children, and valet to my husband; the housekeeping was entirely in my hands."

She did not mind that, however; but there was one thing that made life unbearable. As a Government employee her husband was "a puppet, an automaton." She persuaded him to give up this service, although that reduced them to a dime a day for everything. He was at last free, however, and, becoming engaged in private railway enterprises, he gradually amassed a fortune of some millions of roubles.

In 1876 she was left a widow, with eleven children, four of whom had grown up and gone out into the world. She now became an anchorite, shunning society, invisible to all but the members of her domestic circle. Three things took up her time: The education of her younger children, the love of nature and the passion for music. She was particularly fond of Tchaikovsky's compositions.

Through a young violinist named Joseph Kotek, who was a pupil of Tchaikovsky at the Moscow Conservatory, and who used to come and play with

her, she learned a good deal about the personality of her favorite composer, finding also, that he was in pecuniary straits. With feminine cunning she helped him by asking, through Kotek, to make for her special arrangements of certain of his pieces, for which she paid him extravagant sums—so extravagant, in fact, that he presently began to suspect her motive, and refused to comply with her next request. "Of course," he wrote, "it is not a degradation for an artist to accept money for his trouble; but, besides labor, a work such as you now wish me to undertake demands a certain degree of what is called inspiration, and at the present moment this is not at my disposal. I should be guilty of artistic dishonesty were I to abuse my technical skill and give you false coin in exchange for true—only with a view of improving my pecuniary situation."

Mme. von Meck was not offended by this frank refusal; it led, on the contrary, to further explanations, the result of which was that she sent him \$1,500 to pay his debts. This was in the spring of 1877. In the autumn of the same year, it became apparent that he must have at least a year's rest to recover from the nervous illness from which he had long been suffering. In this emergency the kind-hearted and enthusiastic widow made up her mind to take upon herself, once for all, the responsibility for his maintenance; so she offered him, with many apologies, an annual allowance of \$3,000. He was sensible enough to accept, and thus he was enabled

to give up his professorship at the conservatory and live for his health and his compositions.

A RUSSIAN ROMANCE

The romance of this story lies in the fact that Mme. von Meck and Tchaikovsky never met during all the years she helped him, except accidentally, for a moment. She wished it so, preferring to know him only as her imagination painted him. Even when he accepted her invitation to visit her chateau she was not there, but resided in Moscow while he enjoyed the comforts of her home, with its gardens, servants, carriages, and other luxuries.

Yet, though she had no personal intercourse with him, she knew him better than any one else except his family. In her letters she constantly asked him questions regarding his works, the circumstances attending their creation, his opinions on other composers, and various other topics; in answering these questions he laid bare his soul as he did to no one else. Therefore the world owes Mme. von Meck gratitude not only for making it possible for him to concentrate his energies on composition, thus multiplying the number of his masterworks, but also for being the means of his giving to the world a large number of extremely fascinating letters, the confessions of an emotional composer. They have been translated into excellent English by Rosa Newmarch and cannot be commended too highly to those interested in the inner life of a musical giant.

The allowance from Mme. von Meck continued till the end of 1890, at which time she feared she was on the brink of ruin. In writing to her, he remarked: "I should certainly have gone out of my mind and come to an untimely end but for your friendship and sympathy, as well as for the material assistance (then my safety anchor), which enabled me to rally my forces and take up once more my chosen vocation."

Fortunately his pecuniary situation was at this time greatly improved, and the receipts from his operas, notably *Pique Dame*, more than covered the loss of his private pension. Beginning with 1888, moreover, the Czar paid him an honorary public pension of \$1,500 a year.

LISZT, KING LUDWIG II AND WAGNER

Another great composer who was not too proud to accept pecuniary aid for the sake of his work was Richard Wagner.

He needed such help from the beginning of his career to the end, for divers reasons; his genius was too far ahead of his time to be profitably appreciated; a strangely persistent misfortune attended most of his efforts to earn money; royalties and salaries were much lower than they are now; for example, for conducting a whole season of Philharmonic concerts in London he got only *one thousand dollars* (in other words, he received for four months' rehearsing and conducting half as much as

some singers of his operas have obtained habitually for a single night); fourthly, having the artistic temperament excessively developed, he could not resist the temptation once in a while, when he had some money, to indulge in the luxury and extravagance which he thoroughly enjoyed. "By nature I am luxurious, prodigal, and extravagant, much more than Sardanapalus and all the old Emperors put together," he once wrote to a friend. Finally, his Bayreuth festivals involved so much expense for a new theatre, new scenery and a thousand accessories that he was bound to rely on help from generous patrons.

One of the earliest helpers was Frau Julie Ritter, of Dresden, who supplied him every year with a small but regular sum till 1856. Her son, Alexander Ritter, has just been made the subject of a biography by Siegmund von Hausegger, which includes some letters written by Wagner to Frau Ritter—letters full of gratitude and cordiality. In one of them, dated April 4, 1852, he said: "You alone make possible what I am doing now, because it is owing to you that I am independent and can work without thinking of money."

How much Liszt did to help Wagner, not only by writing brilliant essays on his operas and producing these works at Weimar, but by giving him pecuniary assistance, is vaguely known to all the world. It was Liszt who, as I summed it up in *Wagner and His Works*, "helped him with funds when he would otherwise have been compelled to

stop composing and earn his bread like the commonest day laborer; Liszt who sustained him with his approval when all the critical world was against him; Liszt who brought out his operas when all other conductors ignored them; Liszt who wrote letters—private and journalistic—about his friend's works and aims, besides three long enthusiastic essays on 'Tannhäuser,' 'Lohengrin' and the 'Flying Dutchman,' which were printed in German and French, and, with the Weimar performances of these operas, gave the first impulse to the Wagner movement," accelerating it by fully ten years. For all these efforts we may feel sure he felt fully rewarded by the glowing expressions of gratitude in the letters he got from Wagner, such as these: "You were the first and only one who made me feel the ecstasy of being completely understood," "Your friendship is the most important and significant event in my life," "Where has there ever been an artist, a friend, who did for another what you have done for me!"

At the time Wagner was composing *Siegfried* and *Tristan* another of his chief benefactors appeared on the scene—Otto Wesendonck, a wealthy merchant who lived in a villa overlooking the Lake of Zurich. He invited Wagner to dwell and work in a cottage on his grounds, and frequently, for years, he also gave him pecuniary assistance.

A general appeal for help was made by Wagner to the German sovereigns in an essay in which he promulgated his plans for model performances of

his later works. No one heeded his appeal until the youthful Ludwig II ascended the Bavarian throne. The hearing of *Lohengrin* had inflamed his enthusiasm, and he had made up his mind to come to its composer's assistance as soon as he became king. He did so, paying Wagner's debts, giving him a fine residence in Munich, staging his *Tristan* and *Meistersinger* in superb style, and providing him with the leisure required for completing his Nibelung operas.

But for his timely assistance it is doubtful whether Wagner would have ever composed *Götterdämmerung* and *Parsifal*. Certainly, without it, there would never have been any of those Bayreuth festivals which, at a great cost, established correct traditions for Wagner's art. Many a time did this King diminish "the burdens, which would otherwise have crushed me," to cite Wagner's own words, and Ludwig's royal reward therefor is immortality. Had he not helped Wagner he would now be forgotten; as it is his name will be in the histories of music for all time.

PATRONS OF DVORAK, GLUCK, AND HAYDN

More space is given in this article to Tchaikovsky and to Wagner than to others because their cases are of peculiar importance and interest. No other composers owed so much to benefactors as these two did, unless it be Anton Dvořák, who wrote his best symphony and chamber music after an Ameri-

can Mæcenas, Mrs. Jeannette M. Thurber, had engaged him, at the munificent salary of \$15,000 a year, as the Director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York, a post which left him time to do creative work, too. To Mrs. Thurber the world is indebted for the *New World* symphony, one of the most inspired and melodious master-works in existence.

In earlier epochs it was customary for members of the aristocracy to help composers with their influence or money. When Gluck had completed his *Iphegénie en Aulide* and was negotiating for its production in Paris, violent opposition arose to this project, and had it not been for the efforts of the Dauphiness Marie Antoinette, who had formerly been Gluck's pupil, he might not have gained that footing at the Grand Opera which was so important for the development of his genius and of the French school of opera.

To Prince Paul Anton Esterhazy music owes as much as it does to Ludwig II. He engaged Haydn as conductor of his Eisenbach orchestra of sixteen, which subsequently was increased to thirty at the Prince's Esterhazy castle on the Neusiedler Lake. In this capacity Haydn served nearly thirty years, and when the orchestra was disbanded in 1700 Haydn was allowed a pension of 1,400 florins, which left him independent and free to accept those offers from London to which we owe the best of his symphonies, as well as his oratorios, which were

inspired by his hearing of Handel's choral works in England.

The many years with the Estherhazy family were of incalculable importance not only to Haydn personally but to the cause of musical development in general. The Prince was insatiable in his appetite for new pieces by his inspired conductor, and Haydn was thus encouraged to exercise his creative faculties daily. The important thing, however, was that as soon as he had written anything he was able to try it over with his orchestra and to note all the places capable of improvement. Thus he learned the true idiom and style of each instrument, gaining a facility in writing for all those then in use which made historians speak of him as the father of orchestration.

BEETHOVEN, LISZT AND CHOPIN

Beethoven was not a poor man, like Schubert and Mozart, whose lives might have been saved had some one given them a few dollars in the hour of need and illness. He was constantly bargaining with his publishers, and was comparatively well paid for what he wrote in his ripe years. He might indeed, have lived in great comfort had it not been for his good-for-nothing spendthrift nephew, on whom he squandered his earnings.

It was customary in his days to invite Kings and members of the aristocracy to subscribe considerable sums in advance for the printing of im-

portant compositions, and Beethoven usually got his fair share of these contributions, although he disliked asking for them.

For two years he was a member of Prince Lichnowsky's household, and in 1809 he enjoyed the hospitality of the Countess Erdöd. Eight years previously Prince Lichnowsky had begun to pay him a pension of 600 florins a year, and 1809, when Beethoven received a call to Kassel, the same Prince united with the Archduke Rudolf, Prince Lobkowitz, and Prince Kinsky in offering the great composer the sum of 4,000 florins a year to make him remain in Vienna.

Liszt, as a child, was helped by a similar syndicate of magnates (Amadé, Apponyi, and Ezapary), who contributed 600 florins a year for six years to enable him to continue his musical education. Had he become a composer only, he would have sadly missed that income after the expiration of his term, but as a pianist he soon made a fortune.

Chopin had not one to help him at the beginning of his career, but a kindhearted Scotchwoman, Miss Sterling, made the last months of his life easier by a present of \$5,000.

STATE AID AND MILLIONAIRES

The Scandinavian countries long ago began to endow genius. Grieg received an annual pension from Norway, Gade from Denmark, and others

were similarly helped in these enlightened countries.

Hugo Riemann, in the seventh edition of his admirable *Musiklexikon*, devotes, under the head "Preise," six columns to an account of stipends and prizes for the benefit of students of music. Among them is the Paderewski Prize of \$10,000, by which Horatio Parker, Henry Hadley, Arthur Bird and Arthur Shepherd have been benefited. The German stipends are for the most part small. Among the French the most important is, of course, the Prix de Rome, which enabled nearly all the great composers of the country when they were young (and, of course, poor) to spend a few years in Italy and other countries and thus broaden their minds, enlarge their experience, and ripen their art. Hérold, Halévy, Berlioz, Ambroise Thomas, Gounod, Bizet, Massenet, Pierné, and Debussy were among those thus helped by Government money.

In our own country the Government is not interested in fostering genius. Luckily we have generous millionaires some of whom have spent large sums in behalf of music and musicians; among them Joseph Pulitzer, Major Higginson, E. J. De Coppet, H. H. Flagler, Carnegie, Schwab, Juillard.

Two of our most successful singers—Geraldine Farrar and Mary Garden—might not have done so well had they not succeeded in borrowing large sums, which they afterwards repaid.

Enough has now been said to prove that MacDowell made a grievous mistake in refusing the proffered bounty of that Boston millionaire. As

the editor of *The Etude* has well said: "People come into this world gifted with wonderful natural ability and often quite devoid of anything like business ability. They need support just the same as an orchid needs the atmosphere of the hothouse to foster its bloom. Unless somebody provides the hothouse the orchid dies."

CHAPTER XXXI

FUTURISM AND THE NOBLE CONTEMPT FOR MELODY

After having been a professional critic for over forty years I am vain enough to consider myself as “wondrous wise” as the man who “jumped into a bramble bush and scratched out both his eyes.” You will remember that “when he saw his eyes were out, with all his might and main, he jumped into another bush and scratched them in again.”

Something like that happened to me; only, the organs involved were my ears, not my eyes. Deliberately I made myself deaf for a time—deaf to hundreds of the loveliest tunes and melodies in the world. Fortunately, I got my ears back long ago.

VIENNESE DANCE MUSIC

In 1870-80 I had the great privilege of spending nine months in Vienna. At that time the Austrian capital was the gayest and most melodious city in the world. Johann Strauss, Suppé, and Milloecker were at the height of their creativeness and popularity, daily shaking lovely melodies from their sleeves—melodies that were at once introduced into

the ballrooms, in which everybody seemed to be dancing. I, too, learned to dance—I couldn't help it, the rhythms were so enrapturing and the girls so beautiful! Yet it never occurred to me that some of the melodies which so stirred my blood were really first class—not only of their kind but of any kind.

Nothing would do for me at that time but grand operas and symphony concerts. Operettas I scorned. I attended a performance of Strauss's *The Queen's Lace Handkerchief*, just out, and done with immense *verve*; but I left before the second act was over, because it wasn't like *Götterdämmerung*. I did not know then how greatly Wagner and the antipodal Brahms admired Johann Strauss, both as a melodist and as master of orchestration. I would not have cared in the least to meet Strauss—it would have seemed to me hardly worth while. In a word—to tell the plain, unvarnished truth—I was an unmitigated fool.

Many years later it was a comfort to discover that there were "others." Dr. Hanslick, in his autobiography, related how he went through an experience just like mine, looking down on simple melodies as not worthy of serious consideration. Nor was he by any means the first musician to indulge in the "noble contempt for melody."

OPERA WITHOUT MELODY

The man who coined that phrase, Giulio Caccini, was born in 1550—two hundred and seventy-five years before Hanslick. He was one of the founders of Italian opera; moreover, he wrote the first instruction book for singers, and was one of those who helped to establish the *bel canto* style of vocalism—all of which makes it the more surprising that he should have spoken boastfully of the *nobile sprezzatura del canto*. He had his reasons, however. Italian opera originated, as you all know, largely as a protest against the complicated polyphonic vocal music of that time, in which the words had become absolutely unintelligible in the network of vocal parts. In their attempt to do justice to the words, the Florentine reformers went to the opposite extreme of eliminating melody entirely, substituting for it a dry and tiresome recitative.

Extremes meet. The two composers of our day whose operas have been discussed the most—Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy—have displayed a “noble contempt for melody” reminding one of these founders of Italian opera in the dawn of the sixteenth century. In the Strauss operas there are no vocal melodies. They are made up chiefly of vocal declamation and orchestral din. In his latest work, *The Legend of Joseph*, he leaves out the voice part altogether.

The case of Debussy is equally striking. His *Pelléas et Mélisande* is, as his most devoted admir-

ers admit, "an opera in which there is no vocal melody whatsoever." In fact, so far as opera is concerned, Debussy is no less outspoken in his noble contempt for melody than was Caccini. He admits that he deliberately kept it out of his opera because "melody is suitable only for the song." Those are his own words.

Now let me briefly indicate the results of this "noble contempt for melody" in operas, medieval and modern.

The works of the old Florentines who banished melody from their scores were swept into oblivion as soon as creators of melodies, like Monteverdi and Scarlatti, began to produce their operas; and from that time to the present day those operas have held the stage longest in which there was the most abundant melody.

CONCERNING VERDI

Look at Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, for instance—an opera defective from several points of view, yet brimful of melody and therefore imperishable. Yes, imperishable. When properly sung it still thrills us, after all the deadly assaults of the peripatetic organ grinders.

With *Aida* Verdi reached a higher artistic level in general style and orchestral elaboration; but it is not these things that have made *Aida* the most beloved of all Italian operas. What endears it to music lovers is its astonishing wealth of melody.

Extremely instructive, from this point of view, are the last two operas Verdi wrote—*Otello* and *Falstaff*. In matters of style and craftsmanship these two operas are as far above *Aida* as *Aida* is above *Il Trovatore*; yet neither of them has ever become popular anywhere. Why not? Because there is not in them the same wealth of melody as in the earlier operas. *Otello* has a few gems, but not enough of them to float the whole score; while *Falstaff*, though a masterpiece in style, polish, and details of construction, is melodically arid, and therefore does not attract the public, which prefers the melodic fleshpots of the Egyptian *Aida*.

There is no reason whatever for assuming that Verdi, in his last period, came to share Caccini's *nobile sprezzatura del canto*. He gave no more melodies simply because he had no more to give. He was seventy-four years old when he composed *Otello* and seventy-nine when he wrote *Falstaff*; and at seventy-four and seventy-nine a composer does not beget original melodies. Wagner was only sixty-nine when he finished *Parsifal*, and even in that, original melody is much less abundant than in his earlier masterworks.

RICHARD STRAUSS AND DEBUSSY

If Richard Strauss and Debussy possessed as rich veins of melody as Richard Wagner and Verdi had, you may be sure they would work them for all they were worth. Not having such melodic

treasures, they have given their principal attention to other musical factors, trying to interest the public with harmonic subtleties and novel orchestral colors.

This is a perfectly legitimate procedure, but the fate of the works of these two composers shows once more that there can be no lasting success without plenty of melody. In Paris, in a whole decade, Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* had only a few more than a hundred performances, which, for that city, is a most disappointing number; and in the few other cities, here and abroad, where it has been tried, it was shelved after a few repetitions.

As for the operas of Richard Strauss, each one made a sensation and prospered for a year or two and then fell into neglect. I might cite figures, but much more eloquent than figures is the fact that when Strauss offered the première of his *Ros-enkavalier* to the Dresden Opera on condition that his *Salome* and *Elektra* be given each four annual hearings for ten years, the management balked and refused, knowing that those operas were "played out."

In the concert halls, also, these two composers, though not neglected as they are in the opera houses, do not receive nearly as much attention as they would if they were more melodious. The fact, however, that they have achieved considerable fame and have made money by their methods has encouraged many others to follow in their footsteps.

The one thing these followers have in common is the noble contempt for melody. With ill-concealed scorn they smile at the foolish old-fogies who enjoy the simple, silly tunes of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Grieg, and other out-moded masters. The music of the future, they are convinced, will consist solely of discord, rhythm and color.

TWO FOX STORIES

Why this superlative scorn for melody? Two fox stories here occur to the mind. Foxes are sly. One of them seeing some bunches of grapes hanging out of his reach consoled himself with the thought that they were sour anyway. Another fox, having his beautiful tail cut off in a trap, tried to persuade all his colleagues that tails were no longer in fashion.

Are melodies out of fashion? Not with the public, which enjoys them more than ever. But the tailless foxes known as futurists or cacophonists, are doing their durndest to create the impression that they are building up a new musical art, far nobler than the music of the past, into which so puerile a thing as melody cannot be allowed to enter.

WAR ON CONCORD

Not content with boycotting melody, these cubists also make war on concord. Not for them is what Shakespeare called the "sweet concords of sounds." Their music is an endless chain of premeditated discords—shrill, harsh, ear-piercing. Concord they tell us, in word and deed, is for the old-fogies who like melodies and other sweets. The musical dishes of the future, according to their recipes, will be made up entirely of mustard, horse-radish, vinegar, red pepper, curry, and assafoetida. *Guten Appetit, Kinder!*

In Germany the leader of these cacophonists who make cayenne the staff of life, is Arnold Schönberg. When Fritz Kreisler was asked about Schönberg's music he replied: "What I have heard of his is not music to me; that is, it has no relation to what I consider music to be." Godowsky said: "If you were to sit on the keyboard you would produce as much harmony as Schönberg's music possesses."

Similar verdicts have been spoken by most of the great musicians of the day. The distinguished conductor of the New York Philharmonic, Josef Stransky, told me that he went with Schönberg to a concert in Berlin to hear one of his pieces. When it was over, and the composer looked at him inquiringly, Stransky said: "I have learned a new word in America—*bluff*—You cannot bluff me!"

"You cannot bluff me!" That hits the nail on

the head. If all musicians took that attitude, this ridiculous racket would soon cease; for a ridiculous racket it is, although, of course, it would be unjust to deny that *technically* the cacophonists have done some striking stunts. Yet a moment's thought will convince anyone that it is infinitely easier to do these tricks if you feel under no obligation to follow any rules of musical grammar.

INTIMIDATED CRITICS

Unfortunately, many musicians and critics are intimidated. Remembering how their predecessors made fools of themselves in abusing Wagner and Liszt, they now give Schönberg (and his colleagues in Russia, headed by Stravinsky and Scriabin) the benefit of the doubt, hemming and hawing, and conceding that twenty years hence these men *may* be accused of being as melodious, and simple, and saccharine as Bellini!

Musical history is full of grotesque comedies, but this is the most farcical of them all. How it must amuse the cacophonists themselves, whom this meekness on the part of the critics helps to the desired notoriety!

They are far from being fools, these cacophonists are. As masters of the technique of composition—in their own way—they are diabolically clever; and as advertisers of their shows they beat Barnum by a mile.

One day, when I was talking about Richard

Strauss with Rosenthal, that witty pianist remarked: "If you walk into a parlor and defy all the laws of etiquette, keeping on your hat, putting your feet on the table, and smoking your cigar you will be sure to attract attention."

Now, I do not deny that Strauss is a remarkable composer; he has done *some* things that bear the stamp of genius. But what made him so well known the world over, and so rich, was not the occasional glimpses of genius in his music but his demonstrative defiance of the laws of musical etiquette. He began as a harmless imitator of Brahms and no one heeded him. Then he adopted the methods of Berlioz, carried them to extremes such as even that revolutionary leader never dreamt of, and lo and behold! in a short time he became the most talked about musician in the world, and the richest, too.

The lesson was not lost on others. Schönberg, also, began as gently as a lamb. No one listened to his bleating. Then he put on a lion's pelt and began to roar horribly, and everybody listened and commented.

SCHOENBERG AND THE SUFFRAGETTES

To change the figure, Schönberg learned a lesson from the militant suffragettes. He was ignored till he began to smash the parlor furniture, throw bombs, and hitch together ten pianolas all playing different tunes, whereupon everybody began to talk

about him. The publishers now bought his manuscripts, and the newspapers gave him columns of space.

It is a way the newspapers have. As long as you do something that is simply good without being sensational, you are lucky if you get brief mention in small type on an inside page. But if you become a law-breaker you are put on the front page, with circus headlines, pictures, and all.

That the cacophonists are law-breakers is their boast, since they have discovered its advertising value. In Schönberg's later works all the laws of construction observed by the masters, from Bach to Wagner, are ignored, insulted, trampled upon. The statue of Venus, the Goddess of Beauty, is knocked from its pedestal and replaced by the stone image of the Goddess of Ugliness, with the hideous features of a Hottentot hag.

If Schönberg were alone in this cult of hideousness one might treat him as a freak, or a joke, and pass on to something else with a smile; but this thing has become epidemic.

A redeeming feature of these cacophonists is their modesty, which breaks all records. When Leo Ornstein was not quite nineteen years old his militant musicality won for him the honor of an interview in one of the leading London newspapers. In it he declared that just as Bach, Beethoven and Wagner wrote for *their* generations, so he was writing for *ours*.

After this, it was really insulting for the *Times*

to call him "a trick pianist of the first order" and to suggest that "an energetic housemaid with a feather duster might do some of the things he did, but not really all of them."

When the Chicago Orchestra played one of Schönberg's pieces a local critic remarked that, next time such a thing was done the ensemble could be made still more effective if every subscriber brought along an instrument and joined the orchestra, each playing his favorite tune.

FUTURIST EXPERIMENTS IN ITALY

Italy has been regarded for centuries as the land flowing with musical cream and honey, the home of melody, song and euphony. "God's own conservatory" was an epithet frequently bestowed. It was the land of *bel canto*, of beautiful singing. The voice was supreme and instruments had to be satisfied with a back seat. They were not allowed to be unduly noisy, and dissonance was not encouraged. Palestrina, in the sixteenth century, wrote strains as mellifluous as orange-blossom honey. Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti left dissonance severely alone and wrote scores as smooth as a kitten's fur. Verdi introduced more robust and vigorous accents, but still with discretion. Mascagni and Leoncavallo were boisterous chiefly in their librettos, but their music is still of the honeyed order. Puccini, in his best operas, makes frequent use of

bold dissonances, but camouflages them in such enchanting orchestral colors that they never offend.

All this is to be changed, the voice dethroned and the orchestra trained to make uncanny noises like the voices of wild beasts. Proletarian rudeness and Bolshevikian disregard of all that has heretofore been held to be right are to be made the order of the day.

The Italians are not submitting to this projected revolution tamely. They are quite as rude to the new style composers as these composers are to their ears. Read what happened in Naples, the town which had just buried the idolized, most mellifluous of tenors, Enrico Caruso.

A man named Luigi Russolo invented a special orchestral noise-maker called "bruiteur," which was introduced in the score of an opera, *Surprise*, by the musical futurist, Marinetti. The bruiteur is described as a box with handles and levers, with the aid of which are called forth hideous assorted noises. This instrument was heard some time ago in Paris. There the audience contented itself with hissing. In Naples, when the opera in which it is introduced was heard, the stage was bombarded with potatoes, apples, and ripe tomatoes, so that the artists had to flee. But they managed to gather some of the vegetables thrown at them and hurled them back at the audience.

Opera is evidently a much more exciting thing in Italy than over here. Tomatoes thrown at the audience by the singers—how would we like that?

BEASTLY NOISES VERSUS MUSIC

Opera is not, however, the chosen field of these futurists, who have undertaken to show the world that Italy is not exclusively a land of milk and honey, but also produces vermouth and vinegar and red peppers and other things far less saccharine. These "reformers" have chosen the concert hall for their noisy and noisome tonal experiments and thus it came about that the complacent Leopold Stokowski made his Philadelphia orchestra play a piece called "At Midnight," which reminded me of the ensemble of donkey, dog, cat, and rooster music described in one of Grimm's fairy tales.

The reason why the composer of this particular piece, Alfredo Casella, and his colleagues with similar aims—their names are Malipiero, Castelnuovo, Pizzetti, De Sabata, Respighi—are so eager to substitute cacophony for euphony in their beloved Italy is, I feel quite sure, that they own no beehives and Jersey cows and sugar-maple trees, such as Palestrina and Rossini and Verdi and Puccini had on their farms. When a composer lacks the divine gift of melodic creation he naturally looks around for some other way to make a noise in the world, and thus he is tempted to think that he can make musicians and critics pay heed to him if he entirely leaves the beaten paths of melody and harmony and takes them into the dark jungles of dissonance, from which all rays of light are excluded.

These composers are not satisfied with ordinary

dissonances, transient and effective, and as were used for contrast by the composers of the past. They have whole groups of horrible cacophonies which they hurl at each other like soldiers in a battle, and there is no place for peace makers. Concords are strictly excluded. Keys are jumbled together in inextricable confusion, so that modulation—which is the principal emotional factor in music—is thrown out together with melody.

Let me say it again, in one brief sentence: These “futuristic” cacophonists are deliberately eliminating from music the two things for which it has heretofore been adored—melody and emotion. It’s an uphill fight, Messieurs Casella, Malipiero, and company. You remind me of a half-dozen moles undertaking to undermine Mount Tacoma (which, if transferred to the East, would cover the whole State of Rhode Island). You are unintentionally funny. You will not hurt your beloved Italy, however, for you will soon be forgotten. If you would put your heads together and compose, I will not say an *Aida* or a *Madame Butterfly*, but even a *Lucia* sextet or a *William Tell* overture, I would be more willing to believe in your claims for superiority.

DO WE NEED A THIRD EAR?

My doctor once told me a story about a country patient who wanted to be treated by letter. After reading a brief summary of his symptoms, the doctor wrote that there was evidently something the

matter with his "middle ear," and wrote for further details. The answer he got from his patient was so peppery that it made him sneeze.

"I want you to understand distinctly," wrote the countryman, "that I have no more ears than you have. Two are enough for me, and after your rudely sarcastic insinuation I don't want to have anything more to do with you. I guess my ears are no longer, either, than those of you city folks."

Foolish ignorant man! Instead of being insulted he ought to have been proud to be suspected of having a third ear, "middle" or otherwise. We certainly need more sense organs. Time was when we pitied birds and beasts because they were in danger from their various enemies every time they went on flight or walk. Today we are more beset by dangers than birds and beasts. Every time we cross the street we say a possibly last prayer. If what the gardeners call a "sport" should accidentally occur—a man born with an extra eye on the back of his head, the law of the survival of the fittest would give him such an advantage in this automobile age that before the end of the next century half the country's population would be his descendants—three eyed.

ADVANTAGE IN A THIRD EAR

A third ear is perhaps not so imperatively called for, yet it would be an undoubted advantage, especially to musicians and their victims; particularly

if it were constructed along different lines. The two ears which now adorn our heads were built so as to let us enjoy beautiful sounds; what we need now is a third ear so constructed that it would enable us to get pleasure from the hideous dissonances perpetrated by the futurist composers.

Personally I would gladly give a hundred dollars for such an ear.

ORCHESTRAL PLAYERS LAUGH

Alfred Hertz wrote to me for my book on Richard Strauss about the *Salome* rehearsals at the Metropolitan Opera House, that because of the funny noises the muted brasses were making the players laughed so much that he had to wait quite a few minutes before they could all go on again. There were things which, as some of the players put it, Strauss wrote "only to annoy the musicians," but soon after the orchestra became most enthusiastic and felt really worse about the discontinuance of the performances than the artists.

Evidently the human ear adjusts itself to being boxed, if it is kept up long enough. The same is true of the other sense organs. Limburger cheese is an acquired taste. Children don't like it, but epicures prefer it to cream cheese, and they dote on Camembert, cousin to the Limburger.

Here's where the musical futurists come in. They claim that musically, also, Limburger and Camembert are greater gastronomic delicacies than sweets

of any kind. The Italian composers no longer can fruits with honey and sugar, as Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti did, but with quinine and acetic acid. I am not referring to Puccini and Mascagni, but to their successors. But let us come back to the ears.

Are we going to have a third one, or will it be possible to train those we have now to enjoy these futurists? Leo Ornstein has only two ears, and he seems to enjoy his own music. Judging by their pictures, Debussy, Strauss, Ravel, Schönberg, Stravinsky and the rest of the dissonantal crew also seem to average only two ears apiece. They also, it is safe to assume, enjoy their own compositions very much indeed. Are their ears like those of ordinary mortals?

FUTURIST COMPOSERS' EARS

Apparently not; they hear things which to others are inaudible. Alfred Pochon, of the Flonzaley Quartet, whose own sense of hearing must be very keen, relates how one day he was sitting at the edge of Lake Geneva with Stravinsky, who presently asked, "Do you hear the lake?" His companion heard nothing at all.

Marion Bauer, who relates this incident in the *Musical Quarterly*, also quotes Harold Bauer as saying that Debussy at one time was obsessed with the idea that his hearing was defective because he could not hear the C Major Triad, without the ninth (d) added. "It troubled him exceedingly

until he proved to his satisfaction the physical existence in the tone of the third and fifth of the dominant, after which he used the chord he heard unquestioningly and evolved many combinations which we look upon as being distinctly Debussy."

Debussy himself has related how, when he was serving with his regiment at Evreux, he took great delight in listening to the overtones of bugles and bells. His biographer, Mr. Liebich, has given details on this point which illustrate his aural supersensitiveness; yet the art of hearing overtones that are ordinarily inaudible is one which can be cultivated by any one. Helmholtz commented on it nearly sixty years ago.

Men of science are convinced that future generations will be able to see more colors in the rainbow than we do. The ear for harmony is also being constantly improved. Voltaire wrote in 1735 that "in the end the taste for Rameau will prevail in proportion to the nations' progress in musical knowledge. The ear improves little by little. In the course of three or four generations a change comes to the acoustic organs of a nation."

It is on this change that the "futurist" composers are relying for their ultimate success. If you asked them "Do we need a third ear to appreciate your music?" they might reply, "No, because the ears we now have will gradually adjust themselves to the discords, as they have done again and again before this."

Hurrah for the futurists! But wait a moment!

It doesn't follow that because the musical ears adjusted themselves to the legitimate and inspired dissonances of Bach, Schubert, Chopin, Grieg, Wagner and Liszt, they will be equally accommodating to the arbitrary cacophonies of every Tom, Dick and Harry.

Liszt, in his usual witty way, made clear the difference. Pointing to a dissonance in the manuscript of a young man who came to him, he said: "This cannot be done." "But I have done it," exclaimed the vain youngster. Whereupon Liszt took a quill, dipped it in ink and spattered it over the young man's white vest, remarking at the same time: "This *can* be done, too, but it *must* not be."

Then he bought him a new white vest.

CHAPTER XXXII

EMOTIONAL MOSQUITOES, UNEMOTIONAL SINGERS

If I were as sagacious as I would like to be I could have guessed the great scientific truth that mosquitoes are responsible for malaria. In reading Stanley's *Darkest Africa* I was struck by his saying that Emin Pasha had informed him that he "always took a mosquito curtain with him, as he believed that it was an excellent protector against miasmatic exhalations of the night."

I thought on reading this that it was a ridiculous remark, for how could a net keep out the "miasmatic exhalations," which were held responsible for malaria, when, as Stanley remarked, they entered "under the flaps and through ventilators to poison the inmates"?

What did enter "under the flaps and through ventilators" was, of course, the deadly mosquitoes; but Emin Pasha didn't guess the connection, nor Stanley, nor I, nor anybody. But when the first intimation of the truth was printed in a scientific periodical, I remembered what Emin Pasha had said and I rushed into print with the first editorial written on the important subject, "Are Mosquitoes Dangerous?"

A FURIOUS SERENADE

Today I am going to write another chapter inspired by mosquitoes. The other night I was waked up by a female of this species serenading me. Perhaps that is the wrong word, for a serenade is at least intended to be pleasant, whereas this winged insect's song was anything but pleasant. It was, on the contrary, the furious expression of its impotent rage at not being able to suck my blood because the net made it a case of "thou art so near and yet so far."

Listening to this indignant beast, a happy thought came to me. "Here," I reflected, "is a lowly creature which sings with intense emotional expression—an accomplishment quite beyond the ken of most of the singers I have to hear during the season in Aeolian and Carnegie Halls. Wouldn't it be a good idea to persuade some mosquitoes to open vocal studios on Broadway and teach the sopranos and tenors, the contraltos and basses to sing with emotional fervor?"

I am not joking. I never joke on a serious subject—and to one of my profession what could be more serious than this subject? A million times I have read and a thousand times I have written that music is the emotional art; but how often would anybody guess that fact at concerts or recitals—particularly at song recitals? It is to these I wish to confine my remarks, because it was a singer that suggested the topic. A high soprano it was,

I may add—high enough to be a coloratura singer—but I doubt if a mosquito would care to sing coloratura; it's too unemotional.

It has been suggested that the reason why England has never been a great musical country is that it hasn't been considered good manners there to display the emotions. It is certainly true that while there is much that is scholarly in the realm of English music, very little of it is emotional, as Bach's is, or Schubert's, or Chopin's, or Grieg's.

THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF MUSIC IS PLEASURE

To be sure scholarly musicians have tried to persuade concert goers that cerebral music is above the emotional, which they sneer at as "sentimental." But it was an English philosopher, Herbert Spencer, who told the truth in this matter, in an essay entitled, "Feeling Versus Intellect," and another, "The Purpose of Art," in which he bluntly declares that "the primary purpose of music is neither instruction nor culture but pleasure; and this is an all-sufficient purpose."

Quoting this sentence the editor of the *Musical Courier* commented: "The general public will forever find its pleasure in music that comes from what is metaphorically called the heart and it is inevitable that certain critical writers on music will believe that art has an intellectual basis. They will continue to teach that music has a nobler purpose in life than merely to give pleasure. In literature,

such writers always tack a moral onto their verses. They think that poetry does not fulfil its mission unless it gives a little wholesome advice. But we agree with Spencer that the primary purpose of music is to give pleasure. *Perhaps some composers find it easier to produce intellectual music than to give pleasure."*

The italics are mine. That last sentence is a stroke of genius. It tells a whole volume about cerebral musicians.

The "futurists," by the way, are super-cerebral. They are musical mathematicians, interested in ex-cogitating new dissonantal combinations of tones. These things have their value, but they are not music, any more than a murder is a tragedy, in the artistic sense of the word. Anybody can commit a murder—just as it is the easiest thing in the world to be a "futurist"—but it takes a poet to write a tragedy—or an original melody.

Some recital-givers—strange, unreasoning creatures—think it their duty to let their audiences hear samples of these futuristic cacophonies. Surely, they ought to feel it in their bones that no genuine (i. e., paying) audience will ever care to hear music from which melody and emotion are deliberately excluded. No mosquito—not even a malicious and malarial anopheles—would ever torture his victims with a futuristic song, barren of all emotionalism.

Again I must warn the reader that I am not joking. I used to sleep in New Jersey and I have

often been in Venice, and therefore know all about mosquitoes. Vicious though they are, they acknowledge by their conduct that they recognize a limit. Moreover, their song is monophonic, never polyphonic, or many-voiced (at least, not intentionally so), which is another reason why they will never take to futuristic music.

And now, gentle reader, let me tell you a secret. There is no doubt whatever that the reason why our singers are so willing to try out modernistic songs is that they are so very easy to sing. "Easy? Why, they bristle with dissonantal and intonational difficulties." So they do; but don't you see? If you sing a wrong note nobody will know it!

It would be worse than foolish, to be sure, to urge the average singer to render such a song as the *Erkling*, or Grieg's *Monte Pincio*, or *Friendship*. These things are utterly beyond their powers and they would only murder them. But this very fact shows how deplorably far from being real artists most public singers are.

The most emotional and inspired songs ever written are included in Schubert's *Winter Journey*. Any one of its twenty-four numbers is worth, in terms of genius and feeling, a thousand of the trivial, French-doll-like things that make up most of the programmes usually inflicted on us. Yet in the last forty years this wonderful Schubert cycle, representing the climax of all art songs, has been, so far as I know, produced in New York only four times!

It would be "futuristic" to close this book with such a discord; let me therefore resolve it into an agreeable concord—the reflection that while most singers and players do not yet seem to realize the superlative value of brains in music, audiences, at any rate, have made great progress in the ability to appreciate the best music. This I shall demonstrate conclusively in the final chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIII

SURPRISING PROGRESS IN MUSICAL APPRECIATION

The foregoing chapters touch on nearly every vital phase of music, classical, romantic, modern, futuristic. Irrefutable proof has been provided in these pages that brains—intelligence and emotion—are gradually prevailing over mere mechanical brilliancy of execution. To be sure, we happen to live in a period when creative activity is at a lower ebb than it was a century ago. But in the general appreciation of good music there has been surprising progress. While our forefathers were the contemporaries of greater composers than we now see about us, few of them were able to appreciate their wonder works.

A striking illustration of the advance in the capacity for enjoying good music is provided by the following program played a century ago at a concert given in Vienna by an association for which Schubert wrote several of his symphonies:

- (1) Symphony, by Mozart.
- (2) Potpourri for oboe by Hirsch.
- (3) Continuation of the Mozart symphony.
- (4) Variations for pianoforte, by Payer.

- (5) Conclusion of the Mozart symphony.
- (6) Serenade for pianoforte, violin, flute, guitar, and violoncello, by Payer.
- (7) Overture, "Tamerian," by Winter.
- (8) Phantasie on the organ, by Payer.

Can you imagine anything more commonplace, mediocre, trashy, ridiculous? In the veriest musical slums such a grotesque program would be impossible today. Imagine an audience so weak minded as to be unable to take in the several movements of a simple Mozart symphony in succession! Pot-pourri for oboe, variations for pianoforte, needed as fillers to make a symphonic sandwich palatable to the public! And this in what was, a hundred years ago, the musical centre of Europe!

To an audience that listened to a program like the above, even the light music now to be heard at our summer night orchestral concerts would seem heavy.

THE WORLD DO MOVE

In the realm of pianoforte music the progress of taste and the power of appreciation have also been pronounced. Hans von Bülow relates in his *Ausgewählte Schriften* that no Beethoven sonata was publicly performed in London till 1848, or twenty-one years after his death! Yet some of our American composers think the times are out of joint because their pieces are not played at once by prominent concert pianists.

When Clara Wieck (subsequently Schumann's wife) gave her recitals, many immortal works for the piano were in existence, composed by Bach, Beethoven, Weber, Schubert, Chopin and others; but the public did not care to hear them.

What it wanted, and what the pianists were obliged to play if they would earn a living, was the brilliant and effective, but shallow and trivial pieces of Kalkbrenner, Herz, Hünten, Pixis, and others of that ephemeral class. Ignorant critics of our time were wont to sneer at Liszt because he, too, was in those days given to the performance of brilliant fantasias; but these Liszt fantasias were infinitely superior to the pieces of the men just named; they had genuine musical merit and individuality, for Liszt never touched a thing without gilding it with refined gold, while the pieces of the men named were mere fireworks.

Clara Schumann's father was a man of taste—one of the first who appreciated Chopin and Schumann; but he was also a man of business; he knew that if he should urge his talented daughter to put only good music on her programmes she might as well close her piano and consider her career at an end, for she would everywhere find empty halls awaiting her.

Two of the most musical towns in Germany at that time were Leipzig and Hamburg; yet there was no appreciation for good pianoforte music in either of them. In a letter to Schumann, Clara Wieck wrote from Leipzig: "Tomorrow a concert will

be given by Dreyschock of Prague. He has much digital skill, but no soul, and his style is atrocious. He created a furor in the Gewandhaus, imposing on the audience by rapidity of execution."

MUSICAL HAMBURG, LEIPZIG, PARIS AND VIENNA

In another letter she wrote from Hamburg: "I do hope I shall play well; I am terribly frightened, especially as the people here have no understanding at all of music. Just fancy, they prefer Dreyschock to Thalberg." So even Thalberg was too good for Hamburg—Thalberg whom we would consider a mere virtuoso, or master of technique.

Paris had Chopin in those days, but Liszt has told us that he must have felt how few of the elegantly attired ladies and gentlemen in the salons of the aristocracy really understood him.

Concerning French concerts in general, Clara wrote in her diary: "They are horribly tiresome, lasting three or four hours. The social gatherings here are almost unendurable; in one small room there are more than fifty ladies who sit around the piano and behave in the most banal manner. Their achievements in the way of frivolity, indolence and coquetting are incredible." Nor were the men any better. Batta, the violoncellist, was adored by women, "because he flirted with them even while he was playing."

In 1837, when these words were written, even

Mendelssohn was too deep for Paris. He is "almost unknown here," Clara wrote.

To return to Vienna. Fischhof wrote to Schumann at this time that Clara Wieck "has been the first to play here publicly compositions of the romantic school—a bold venture in face of a public in no way prepared for such a thing . . . She was also the first to play publicly fugues and études; nay, she even played Beethoven, which is *very seldom* done here except at the *Konzert Spirituell*." The italics are Clara's.

Is it a wonder that at a time when even Beethoven (a decade after his death) and Mendelssohn were music of the future and Chopin was considered "unplayable and incomprehensible," Schumann was neglected, earning only \$75 a year by his compositions at the time when he married Clara Wieck? Or is it surprising that Clara should have failed to interest the public in his works when even Liszt had not succeeded?

Poor girl! She loved Schumann dearly, and she was always the first to get copies of his new pieces. But in her diary she wrote: "It would give me pleasure to play them, but the public does not understand them. How I dread to have him present some time and witness how little impression his compositions make compared with the trivial pieces of others!" But she knew his day would come.

It is with us still, and the "futurists" will not end his vogue, nor that of the other great masters

to whom homage has been paid in this volume by a writer to whom brains, emotion, and genius are the only things worth while in music.

THE END

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